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May we not also find that when these pursuits are cultivated with a constant reference to the Great Creator, "and when through them we endeavour to habituate our minds to the contemplation of his power and goodness, may we not trust, with a better hope, that such a study will be productive of advantages, which shall not desert us at the hour of death?"

> The love of Nature works,
> And warms the bosom: till at last sublim'd
> To rapture, and enthusiastic heat,
> We feel the present Deity, and taste
> The joy of God to see a happy world!
>
> THOMSON.

FOREST scenery is, perhaps, better adapted than any other for the contemplation of the works of Nature. There we may with least disturbance study those objects which are generally far removed from the haunts of men. We learn to cherish those gentle thoughts, which endear many a woodland walk, and afford delightful associations as we stroll through a sequestered nook, a bushy dell, or by a "bosky bourn." We may then exclaim in the beautiful language of Milton —

> I know each land, and every alley green,
> Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
> And every bosky bourn from side to side.

In the spring and summer months, every field is a wilderness of beauty, full of enjoyment. Every copse or hedge-row is redolent of sweets. A lesson full of meaning is then conveyed to us with touching simplicity, proclaiming gently, but irresistibly, and in cheerfulness and peace, the

superintendence of a kind and benevolent Providence. The loveliest images are presented to our imagination, whether it be a flock of sheep watched over by their shepherd — a brood of chickens fostered under the wing of their mother, or flowers clothed with beauty by their Great Creator. When we reflect, also, how bountifully the means of occupation and happiness are spread before us, and how cheaply some of our truest pleasures may be purchased, we may learn to be thankful for such a lavish dispensation of blessings. We may then feel that even the most lowly things are not insignificant, and that Nature is every where pregnant with the best kind of instruction.

I shall always reflect with pleasure on some interesting rides I had this spring with an intelligent friend and naturalist, in the more retired parts of Windsor Great Park and Forest. The gentle rains had invigorated the earth — every thing had just burst into freshness and beauty — the birds sang their joyous notes — the Cuckoo was heard in every direction — the green Woodpecker uttered its wild cry, and the Herons were making their silent gyrations over our heads, as we rode under the trees on which their nests were forming. We there contemplated an enormous beech-tree (and there are very many in this fine park), spreading its widely extended branches which were clothed

with their early and glittering leaves, while the sight of some sturdy old oak pollards, covered with ivy, from which

> The stock-dove only through the forest cooes
> Mournfully hoarse—

verdant hollies, and here and there a wild cherry tree, with its silvery blossoms, added to the charm of the scenery. Sometimes a rabbit, a hare, or a pheasant would run for shelter amongst the fern—a herd of deer might be seen reposing in some sequestered dell, or a group of cattle indolently standing in the shallow water of a pond. Such was the spot we were engaged in contemplating with that delight which a lover of nature alone can experience, (it was near the Sandpit gate), when our attention was called to the hoarse croaking of a pair of Ravens, who were apparently endeavouring to take possession of one of the nests of the herons that build on the tops of the trees, which, in this part of the park, far exceed in height any I have yet met with. The heron defended its nest with great courage, uttering shrill and distressed cries, and after the battle had lasted some length of time, the ravens were beaten off.

This herony is a noble appendage to the Park, and any monarch might well be proud of it, as well as of the trees on which the nests are built. As I am not aware of there being more than

eleven or twelve heronries left in this country, it is to be hoped that every care will be taken of the one referred to. Severe penalties were formerly imposed on any person killing a heron, and I believe that the laws enacting them have not been repealed; at present we find herons amongst the trophies nailed by keepers upon some stunted oak tree, in the midst of magpies, jays, owls and polecats, although the damage they do to fish-ponds is comparatively trifling, feeding, as they chiefly do, upon frogs, snails, water-rats, and small eels. In the breeding season, when they have to provide for their ravenous young, they may attack the larger sort of fish, but the interest which must always be attached to this royal bird, connected as it is with the chivalry and ancient sports of this country, ought to be sufficient to protect it from wanton destruction, independently of its own wild and picturesque character.*

In order to ascertain, as far as we were able, the extent of destruction committed by these persecuted birds in the breeding season, my companion, whose thirst for information on subjects connected with natural history is of no ordinary degree, procured a young heron about two-thirds grown, which had fallen from the nest and been killed.

* I have since found that about thirty heronries still exist in this country, and Mr. Yarrell has enumerated them in alphabetical order of counties, in his charming history of British birds.

On dissecting it, the stomach was found very large and much distended. It contained fish-bones, one fish, probably, from its appearance, a roach, half digested, and eight inches and a quarter in length. There were also pellets of hair an inch and quarter long, apparently the hair of the field mouse — the scales of the common snake, (natrix torquata) and the bones of the frog. On the ground, under the heron's nest, we found a pellet of hair about as big as an hen's egg, and having exactly the microscopical characters and general appearance of the water-rat (arvicola amphibia). After searching repeatedly under the different nests, we were never able to discover any rejected particles of fish or even of fish bones. The pellets of hair were frequent.

It is evident from the above facts, that the food of the heron is not confined to fish, and, therefore, that the depredations, it is supposed to commit in fish-ponds, are not so extensive as has been asserted. It may be remarked that from the comparatively small size of a heron's nest, the young, when about half grown, are constantly falling out of it, and thus many perish. A visit to the heron-shaw,* for so it was antiently called, in Windsor

* The Heron-shaw originally signified the wood or coppice where the herons built; thence it was transferred to the bird itself, which was called Heronshaw; and thus the proverb, "a hawk from a handsaw," the meaning of which was, that in a very

Great Park, will amply repay the trouble of going thither, if rambling in this most beautiful domain,

Supremest place of the great English kings,

can ever be so considered.

Before I conclude this notice of herons, it may be as well to mention that they breed early in the spring, probably beginning to lay their eggs about the middle of March, as on the 8th of April I found discarded egg-shells under their nests. The cry of the young birds is very peculiar, resembling the sound of distant hammering. I have only heard it when the old bird was driven from the nest, and it arises probably from cold or hunger. The affection of the parent birds for their young is very great, and I have elsewhere, recorded the fact of a young heron having been removed, at night, to a place at some miles-distance, and put into a walled garden, where it was discovered by the old birds early the next morning, and was regularly fed by them till it was able to fly away. As there were probably other young ones in the nest to be fed, this fact shews not only the affection, but the perseverance of the parent birds. It is not improbable that the young are fed from the partly digested contents of the stomachs of the old birds, as, although I have repeatedly watched to see their arrival from dis-

distant flight, it was difficult to distinguish the hawk from the heron.

tances, where they had evidently gone in search of food during the breeding season, I have never yet observed anything in their bills. Indeed the stomach of the heron is so capacious, that they probably swallow everything as they catch it, which they do occasionally while on the wing.

I delight in watching the silent manner in which a heron quits its nest, or the branch of a tree on which it has settled. When it is considered that the length of this bird is upwards of three feet, and at least five feet from the tip of one wing to the other, this is not a little surprising. Not a sound however is heard on these occasions.

I happened to make a visit to the heronry on a windy day. Some of the birds quitted their nests and soared in circles over the tops of the trees. In doing this, I observed that they sometimes stretched out one leg and then another, and frequently both together. It was evident that they served as rudders to enable them the better to perform their gyrations. I am not aware that this fact has been hitherto noticed by naturalists. In a straightforward flight, the legs are extended, and the head placed between the shoulders. The patience of this bird must be very great, as it may be observed for hours together, watching for its prey by the side of some ditch or shallow water. It can probably also live a long time without food,

as in severe winters it must be difficult for it to obtain the usual supply.*

That favourite diversion of our ancestors, heron-kawking, is now, it is to be regretted, nearly at an end. It must have been an exciting and beautiful sight with well trained hawks. Gay evidently thought so.

> The tow'ring hawk let future poets sing,
> Who terror bears upon his soaring wing;
> Let them on high the frighted hern survey,
> And lofty numbers paint their airy fray.

The remarks on the wanton destruction of herons, may be applied to that persecuted and almost extinct bird, the Raven. The only pair I have ever seen, with the exception of those in Windsor Great Park, was in the neighbourhood of Selborne, where they served to remind me of Mr. White's very interesting account of the pair, which had built their nests and reared their young for so many years on the "Raven's Oak tree" at that place. There are many curious associations connected with this bird—it is frequently mentioned in our bible history, as employed by the Almighty as the *caterer* of food, and of its young being under the immediate care of the Great Creator—it has been immor-

* In severe winters, when the inland-springs and waters are locked up by frost, these birds frequent the sedgy pools and salt marshes near the sea.

talized by our Shakspeare, and referred to by Addison, Dryden and Young, and indeed by many of our poets. The raven not only has been, but still is connected with the history of the superstitions of this country, and it was but lately that I was assured by "a sober hind" at work in this neighbourhood, that his companion had been warned of his approaching death, in consequence of a raven having always croaked when it flew over his head. Like the Bustard,* its existence in this country is nearly at an end, but in places where they are still to be found it is to be hoped that some pains may be taken to preserve them from destruction. Ravens, indeed, must have been much more numerous a few years ago, than they are at present. Mr. White mentions his having seen forty of them in 1778 playing over the hanger at Selborne at one time.

* The last bustard that was killed near Thetford in Norfolk (the bustard-country) was in the year 1831. We were intimately acquainted with a Norfolk gentleman (Mr. Whittington) a great sportsman, who assured us that he once had a pack of bustards rise before his gun; he suddenly came upon them in a gravel pit. Mr. Southey and Sir Richard Hoare have both mentioned the curious fact, that the bustard has been known to attack men on horseback at night.

Mr. Yarrell informs me that the last bustard known to be killed in England was shot, in the spring of 1843, in Cornwall. It was a female, and had been seen in a turnip field for several days. This is the first instance of the bustard being found in Cornwall.

The Kite, also, has become nearly an extinct bird in this country, from a foolish apprehension, entertained both by gentlemen and their keepers, that they destroy the game. On examining a nest of one of these birds, it will be found that frogs, mice and snakes are the chief food of their young. It is now but very seldom that we are indulged with a sight of the beautiful gyrations of this bird, or of seeing it supporting itself in the air with a motion almost imperceptible. Its sweeping circles are peculiarly elegant, and often have I watched them with the greatest pleasure. How much is it to be regretted that this noble bird should have been doomed to destruction by those, who have taken but little trouble to enquire into its asserted predatory habits.

When the kite was more numerous than it is at present, its appearance was hailed as the harbinger of fine weather. Bacon tells us that when it was seen flying aloft it portended fair and fine weather.

See gentle brooks, how quietly they glide,
Kissing the rugged banks on either side;
While in their crystal streams at once they show,
And with them feed the flow'rs which they bestow,
Though rudely throng'd by a too near embrace,
In gentle murmurs they keep on their race.

DENHAM.

I HAVE occasionally found myself strolling on the banks of one of those little narrow streams which *wriggle,* if the expression may be used, through some green verdant meadows. Here and there bull-rushes, water-docks, and other aquatic plants nearly meet as they bend towards each other from either side. In some places there are deep holes, generally under the roots of some stunted alder or willow-pollard, and here and there, in places where cattle have made a passage, the water trickles over a gravelly bottom,* sparkling as the sun-beams fall upon it. The banks are generally undermined by the winter floods, and are full of rat holes, one of which is occasionally the resort of the kingfisher, which darts by now and then with a silent rapidity. Water-hens are abundant in these localities, and may be seen of an evening

* This is a favourite place of resort for a swarm of little fish — "fry innumerable."

peering over the meadows in search of food, and jerking their white tails as they wander about;—nothing can be more agreeable than a stroll on a fine day by the side of one of these little modest streamlets. They have but little inducement for the angler, but much for the naturalist. Here he may gather nature's nosegay of sweetest flowers, while he reclines on a bank,

> whereon the wild thyme blows,
> Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;
> Quite over canopied with lush woodbine,

or listen to

> The lark, who amid the clear blue sky,
> Carols, but is not seen.

The very remembrance of these scenes is delightful, for they leave a freshness in the mind which time cannot obliterate. I am thankful that my official employments enable me still occasionally to enjoy them, and I can exclaim with the poet of Wiltshire as I walk on the banks of a favourite river, or sit under the shade of a tree by its sides—

> 'tis pleasant when thy breath is on the leaves
> Without, to rest in this embowering shade,
> And mark the green fly, circling to and fro,
> O'er the still water, with his dragon wings
> Shooting from bank to bank, now in quick turns,
> Then swift athwart, as is the gazer's glance,
> Pursuing still his mate.*

* Mr. Bowles.

Such walks and scenes as I have described conduce to a healthy state both of body and mind, and enable us

To meet life's peaceful evening with a smile.

Our beautiful meadow scenery may, perhaps, be called exclusively English. The verdure of the grass, the variety of flowers, the song of the lark on high, and of the nightingale in the tangled hedge, the thrush heard in the distance on the top of some spreading oak, and the swallow taking its persevering and elegant flight, now aloft and then skimming over the surface of the meadow, are to be heard and seen in this country only, at least collectively. Many of the trees, also, which are met with on the banks of some of our streams are full of beauty. It has been remarked that the weeping willow,

which dips
Its pendant boughs, stooping as if to drink,

was the only one of its species that can be called beautiful; surely, however, those who have seen our common willow,* unpollarded and unlopped, as nature intended it to be, must confess that it is not only a beautiful and graceful tree, but also a picturesque one. Even when pollarded, it adds

* See some beautiful specimens of the willow, in the Poet Young's garden at Welwyn, which have been suffered to grow uninjured and unpruned.

to the charm of meadow scenery. Some of the old trees I have met with on the banks of a rivulet, throw out their bold roots in a direction away from it, then again grasp the ground, as if mindful that the undermining of the bank by the action of the water would cause their destruction. It is amongst these roots that sheep delight to bask. Sometimes, also, I see them under the dry bank of the stream, where they appear to have made a resting place for themselves during the heat of the day.

> A little bank there was,
> With alder-copse and willow over grown,
> Now worn away with winter floods.

As the evening approaches, they scatter themselves abroad in search of food, and then the "tinkling bell" may be heard, another of those rural sounds which add a charm to the country.

But it is time to close my little sketch of rural scenery. It is best enjoyed when the air is soft and balmy, and when all nature puts on a smiling aspect. At such a time we may well rejoice in the prospect around us, and offer up our tribute of gratitude and love to Him, who has spread before us so many objects for our gratification and delight.

Thy forests, Windsor, and thy green retreats
At once the Monarch's and the Muses' seats,
Invite my lays.

POPE.

THE immediate neighbourhood of Windsor Great Park is rich in varied woodland scenery. There are not only fine thriving Oaks, throwing out their gigantic arms, but sturdy Pollards without end, which seem to have set time, and seasons, and decay at defiance. They are gnarled and knotted, twisted and distorted, yet at the same time vigorous and sound at heart, putting one in mind of a weather-beaten old sailor whose limbs are firm and his body healthy, although his hair is grey and his face seamed with wrinkles. The beeches, too, may be seen of all ages and sizes, picturesque and beautiful in their decay, but while in full vigour and dotted with their sparkling leaves, they are the richest ornament of the wood. The holly loves to nestle under the shelter of its graceful pendulous branches, affording a contrast to its smooth white trunk, on which here and there some pretty lichen may be seen, as if placed there on purpose by the hand of Nature to decorate her favourite tree. I love a beech at all seasons of

the year. In the early spring it seems not only the peculiar resort of the throstle, "that attic songster," and from its top-most branches we hear

> that sprightly wildness in its notes,
> Which clear and vigorous warbles from the beech,

but its soft green leaves burst forth, covered with a silvery down, and nothing then can be more delicate than their hue, or more refreshing to the eye.

In the summer its foliage assumes another character, but still a beautiful one. Its leaves are indeed green, but not of that delicate green we see in the spring. A slight tinge of brown may be perceived along the margin of the leaf, which is otherwise smooth and sparkling. The large red fungus may be seen under its shade, while the rough husks of the mast of former years are thickly scattered about. Here and there are small patches of fern, and round the trunk the ground is covered with the softest moss. Here

> At ease reclined in rustic state,

the squirrel's "airy bounds" may be seen, and the screaming jay may be heard. Here, also,

> Midst gloomy shades, in warbles clear,
> Wild nature's sweetest notes we hear.

A black-bird with its orange bill, fearless of danger, approaches the spot, and then retreats uttering its note of alarm. The green wood-

pecker may be heard tapping the loose bark of some decaying tree, and then taking its jerking flight to another, filling the wood with its peculiar wild-cry, which, Mr. White says, seems as if it was laughing at all the world. Nor must the Cuckoo be forgotten in this description of woodland scenery. Its hollow note is responded to by that of another, sometimes in rapid succession, till the sounds approach near and more near, and then sudden silence ensues. It is pleasing to hear these unvarying notes. They are listened to with delight by every lover of nature, and there are few birds which would be more missed in rural retreats.

The merry Cuckoo, messenger of spring,

is hailed on his first arrival as the harbinger of fine weather by every peasant in the country. Shakspeare calls it "the plainsong cuckoo," but its notes vary according to the season of the year.

While seated on the spot I have described, it is pleasant to watch the actions of a Squirrel. One may sometimes be seen bounding from branch to branch, and then descending to the ground, when it will sit on its hind legs, look around, and then wash its face with its fore-paws. All its actions are graceful. On being disturbed, it hurries up a neighbouring tree, gets on the side opposite to the beholder, and may soon be seen on the topmost branches, except when it hides itself in some

secure retreat, or takes refuge in its *drey*, from which it peeps with a mixture of curiosity and alarm. Mr. Bowles prettily describes it,

> with ears erect,
> The squirrel seems to hark! and then to dance,
> With conscious tail aloft, and twinkling feet,
> Nimbler, from bough to bough.

But it is time to attempt a description of the appearance and foliage of the Beech in autumn. I have observed that its rich and golden hues, at this period of the year, depend very much on the soil in which it grows. In chalky soils, in which the beech delights, nothing can be more beautiful than its autumnal foliage. This is best seen when the tree flourishes on some precipitous bank, its roots watered by a meandering rill, while some of them fix themselves in the fissures of the chalky rock; when they appear above the ground, with all their various contortions, they are covered with moss, affording a delightful seat for the traveller. Here mixed with the duller foliage of the Oak, whose

> thick branches stretch
> A broader, browner shade,

the beech may be seen in all its beauty, especially when a setting sun flings bright departing rays on its topmost branches. Nothing can then exceed the lustre of its golden canopy. It is a sight which Gilbert White delighted in, and which he could best describe. The song of birds

is now hushed, and if anything disturbs the silence, it is the occasional fall of the beech-nut, as the thoughtful squirrel attempts to secure it for his winter hoard.

Dear, lovely Nature! Often have I courted your delightful shades far from the haunts of men, my heart expanding, I trust, with love and gratitude to Him, who has afforded me so many objects for contemplation and enjoyment. Often have I thought while reclining where

> the moss-grown beech
> O'er canopies the glade,

what a happy world this would be, if a sincere love of the Great Creator kept pace with those kindly feelings, which we are instructed to shew to each other. Our angry and sordid passions would be lulled, and peace, harmony and good-will to each other might then abound in this world, instead of so much sin and misery.

Many lessons might we learn from the objects which surround us, and few more important than that of shewing mercy and kindness to the animal creation,— remembering that every thing was not only made by, but is under the peculiar care of our common Father. One of our poets, imbued with this feeling, has thus delightfully written

> The tribes of woodland warblers recite
> The praise of Him, who ere he form'd their lord,
> Their voices tun'd to transport, wing'd their flight,

And bade them call for nurture, and receive:
And lo! they call; the blackbird and the thrush,
The woodlark and the red-breast jointly call;
He hears, and feeds their feathered families;
He feeds his sweet musicians — nor neglects
Th' invoking ravens in the greenwood wide;
And tho' their throats coarse rattling hurt the ear,
They mean it all for music; thanks and praise
They mean, and leave ingratitude to man.*

But I must not forget to notice the appearance of the Beech in winter. Its leaves have now been shed, except those on some of the lower scrubby branches, which generally remain till the succeeding spring. Its trunk may then be seen, smooth in many places and appearing highly polished. Some I have seen standing to a height of forty or fifty feet from the ground to the first branch, looking like stately columns of marble.† This has been the case where the trees have been thickly planted together. In general, however, the trunk of the beech is short, but of great thickness; it is impossible to see it without being struck with the effect it produces in forest scenery. The little, slight and pendulous branches which almost sweep the ground, are full of grace and lightness. When covered with a hoar frost they appear to

* SMART.

† Some such trees may be seen not a great way from the clump of cedars in Richmond Park, below the terrace on the hill, and are well worth a little trouble in looking for them. They are on the bank to the left of the cedars, below Lord Erroll's house.

great advantage. The beech has been called the Hercules and Adonis of our woods. Except perhaps those at Knowle and Burnham, there are few places where so many fine beeches are to be met with as in the Park and enclosures of Windsor.* They will amply repay the search necessary to find them out in many secluded haunts;

In Windsor's groves your easy hours employ.

The lovers of woodland scenery, and especially the admirers of this my favourite tree, will not find my descriptions exaggerated. Mr. White, of Selborne, calls them "the most lovely of forest trees," and other writers have dwelt on their grace and beauty. Many of the trunks are studded with projecting knobs and other excrescences, and sometimes appear fluted or grooved. There is something also in the bark, which is favourable to the growth of various mosses and lichens, which contrast well with the colour of the bark. The roots of the trees, too, are thrown out with great boldness, and when they appear above the ground, are generally covered with mosses of a beautiful soft green, differing in shade from those on the stem. When in this state they

* In Sir John Filmer's estate, near Sittingbourne, in Kent; near Cuffnells, in the New Forest; and at Rose-Hill Park, near Winchester, are some Beech trees of magnificent size and great beauty.

are fine studies for a painter, especially when their brown or glowing orange foliage is contrasted with the more lasting green of the oak. Few artists have delineated forest scenery at this period of the year with happier effect than Mr. Starke, the Hobbima of England. He follows nature with so much truth, and pourtrays her on his canvass with so much effect and talent, that on looking at one of his pictures, I have almost fancied myself strolling in the wood, enjoying the tranquillity of its scenery, and exclaiming with the poet;

> O lead me, guard me from the sultry hours,
> Hide me, ye forests, in your closest bowers,
> Where the tall oak his spreading arms entwines,
> And with the beech* a mutual shade combines.†

* A friend of mine remarks, that Cæsar, in his commentaries, mentions, that he did not see the 'Fagus' in England: and yet Cæsar marched through the eastern part of Kent, where the Beech is indigenous. Did he mean the chestnut or a particular kind of oak, by the generic term of Fagus? The Italian poet, Fracastorius, who knew the niceties of the Latin language, seems to use the word 'fagus' for an oak,

> Glandiferâ sub fago, aut castaneâ hirsutâ,

and perhaps by the word 'Fagus,' Cæsar meant the φήγος, or Quercus æsculus—the Italian oak,—which of course he did not meet with in Britain.

† GAY.

It is common to find numbers of them lying dead in the fields and hedge-rows, without any apparent external injury. The cause of this general mortality does not appear to be understood.
BELL'S QUADRUPEDS.

THERE are numerous little circumstances connected with the study of Natural History, which are not yet explained, and it certainly affords me some degree of gratification and pleasure, when I have discovered any fresh facts which throw light upon them. Persons who live much in the country, and are in the habit of making observations during their walks, must have seen, in the spring, numbers of the common Shrew-mouse lying dead in various directions. This circumstance has attracted the attention of many Naturalists, who, on making enquiries as to the cause of it, amongst their poorer neighbours and labourers, have had it accounted for in a variety of ways. Some have asserted that owls will kill, but not eat them, as the loins of the little animal have been found pinched as if by the beak of a bird. If this were the case, the wise and solemn owl might justly be liable to a charge of wanton cruelty, to say nothing of its waste of time during its nocturnal flights. The fact, however, is that the owl catches

and feeds on the shrew, as it does on any other mouse which comes in its way. Other persons have maintained that cats will kill this little quadruped, but that they always refuse to eat it, in consequence of a rank offensive smell which it is said to possess. I have, however, found dead shrews far away from the haunts of cats, and they may now be fairly exonerated, like the owl, from this charge. The very circumstance of this mystery in the history of the shrew, has given it a sort of importance amongst country-people, even in the present day, and many will not only refuse to touch it, but they even look upon it with dislike. They consider it to be venomous, and it was formerly thought that if it ran over a person's foot, he would become lame in consequence. Mr. White, in his History of Selborne, mentions a shrew-ash tree, which after having had a large hole bored in it, and a live shrew-mouse plugged up in it, was thought to be a remedy for the evils inflicted by this harmless animal. Its very name has been adopted as a term of reproach to a scolding woman, probably from the venom it was supposed to possess. Shakspeare, indeed, has now and then used it with terms of endearment —

> Pretty Jessica, like a little shrew.
> Bless you, fair shrew.

Wishing, however, to rescue this little quadruped

from the odium which has, during so many ages, been attached to it, I am obliged to confess that it is a most pugnacious animal, and this pugnacity is the cause of the death of those we meet with in our walks, during the months of April and May. At this season of the year the males fight together, and I have examined several of those I have found dead. They were all males. I sent some also, to Mr. Gulliver of the Royal Horse Guards, Blue, whose researches into Natural History have been equally curious and indefatigable, and he discovered several livid spots about the neck and shoulders. And from other appearances, it would seem that the animals died from injuries received when contending for the females. This decisive fact will be sufficient to controvert the various opinions, which have been brought forward, as to the frequent appearance of the dead shrew.

It may be mentioned that this species is now ascertained not to be the *Sorex araneus* of Linnæus, but the *Sorex tetragonurus** of Continental authors.

The Hedge-hog is another of those persecuted animals, which the superstitions of the vulgar and ignorant have denounced as injurious to man. These little inoffensive and patient animals are, therefore, killed without remorse, and nailed to

* This mouse in Suffolk is called the *rennie*; the name of *shrew* is not at all known to the peasantry.

trees and barns as trophies of the zeal and activity of their destroyers. They have been accused of sucking cows, injuring their udders, and other delinquencies, all of which accusations are equally erroneous. So far from being hurtful, they are beneficial to man, by feeding on slugs, snails, beetles, and other insects, thus assisting in keeping down too great a number of them, and preventing their becoming injurious in our fields and gardens. The hedge-hog will also feed upon fruit, such as apples, crabs, &c., and I have reason to believe on black-berries. I have also been assured that it eats frogs and mice. It has been accused of sucking eggs, but I have never, with all my enquiries, been able to procure a satisfactory proof that this was the case from any of the keepers in the Royal Parks, in most of which the hedge-hog is plentiful. It will also feed on some roots, and Mr. White, in his history of Selborne, mentions its eating those of the plantain in his garden. It remained, however, for Professor Buckland to introduce this animal in a new character—viz. that of a devourer of snakes. I first met with the account in Mr. Bell's history of British Quadrupeds, and it is thus agreeably related.

"Having occasion to suspect that hedge-hogs, occasionally at least, preyed on snakes, the Professor procured a common snake, and also a hedge-hog, and put them into a box together.

Whether or not the former recognized its enemy was not apparent. It did not dart from the hedge-hog, but kept creeping gently round the box. The hedge-hog was rolled up, and did not appear to notice the snake. The professor then laid the hedge-hog on the snake, with that part of the ball where the head and tail meet downwards, and touching it. The snake proceeded to crawl —the hedge-hog started, opened slightly, and seeing what was under it gave the snake a hard bite, and instantly rolled itself up again. It soon opened a second, and again a third time, repeating the bite, and by the third bite the back of the snake was broken. This done, the hedge-hog stood by the snake's side, and passed the whole body of the snake successively through its jaws, cracking it, and breaking the bones at intervals of half an inch or more, by which operation the snake was rendered motionless. The hedge-hog then placed itself at the tip of the snake's tail, and began to eat upwards, as one would eat a radish, without interruption, but slowly, till half the snake was devoured. The following morning the remaining half was also completely eaten up."

It is to be regretted that the size of the snake was not mentioned, as we might then have judged of the extent of the appetite of a hedge-hog.

The hedge-hog is readily tamed, and will become

familiar and even affectionate, as is the case with most animals, when treated kindly. It is to be hoped that these facts may assist in rescuing it from the persecution to which it has so long been subjected.

The Mole, also, is another of those useful animals which the ignorance and prejudice of man has doomed to destruction, and against which he wages continual warfare. Such is the impression of the injury done by them, that in some parts of Somersetshire the farmers are in the habit of carrying a gun, when they walk in their fields, in case they should see the earth in the act of being turned up by the moles; when this is the case, the farmer fires at the spot, and thus many moles are killed in the course of the year.

So far from the mole being an injurious, it is a most useful animal to the farmer. The little hillocks it casts up are generally composed of a rich and fine mould, extremely beneficial to the land when spread, and this should be done daily, or as often as the mole-casts are observed. A little boy may thus be profitably employed at a trifling expence. Young wheats, for instance, this sort of top-dressing invigorates, and besides, the runs of the mole beneath the surface are either so many channels to convey water to the roots, or they serve as drains to prevent too great an accumulation of it in one spot. There can be no

doubt that if the mole-casts are suffered to remain too long unspread, the young grain or grasses must suffer from suffocation, but this is the fault of the farmer. There are also other benefits to be derived from the mole. It devours not only immense quantities of the larvæ of the cockchaffer and of various flies and beetles, but also destroys the wire-worm, and that so effectually, that few are to be found in localities frequented by this useful animal. When we consider the length of time the grub of the cockchaffer remains in the earth, before it assumes the shape of a perfect insect, and the destruction committed by it on the roots of plants, and when we hear, as we too often do, of the ravages of the wire-worm, we may wonder that the very instrument appointed by Almighty God to prevent those ravages, should itself be destroyed by man. I am, however, glad to find that in some places farmers are now beginning to admit the utility of the mole, in consequence of their having experienced the good effects of its operations.

I noticed in a former work a fact relative to the economy of the mole, which I have not seen mentioned by any writers upon this animal. I refer to a sort of basin which it makes, and which serves as a place of deposit for worms. M. St. Hilaire, Le Court, and other French Naturalists, who have paid much attention to the habits of the mole,

have not noticed this circumstance. An intelligent mole-catcher, who has been employed by the Crown for many years in Richmond Park, was the first to inform me of this curious fact, which has since been confirmed to me by another mole-catcher. The clay basin formed by the mole will sometimes contain nearly a peck of worms. On examining them, each will be found to have been bitten near the head, and in such a way that it is not quite deprived of life. These basins appear to be formed in the winter, but to have the chief supply of worms deposited in them during the spring months. It has been suggested to me that as the young of the mole are very tender and require considerable warmth, it is not improbable that the parents make this provision against the breeding season, in order to prevent the necessity of their quitting them for any length of time in search of food. Should this be the case, it is a curious fact in the history of these animals.

The Owl is another animal, the utility of which is not sufficiently known, and it is, therefore, destroyed most recklessly by game-keepers and country people generally. Occasionally a more enlightened farmer may be met with, who, aware of the benefits he derives from this bird, will afford it admission into his barns; but this is not enough. Farmers generally, and the proprietors of land and manors should use their influence

for the careful protection of this nocturnal wanderer.

Mr. Waterton has ably and most agreeably advocated the cause of these interesting birds. Like himself, I have been a careful observer of them, and have also examined the places of their retreat. There pellets of mice may be seen in abundance, but I never found a feather, or the slightest indication that birds of any kind, either old or young, had formed part of the prey of the owl. The charge against this bird of its sucking eggs is equally erroneous. It lives in perfect harmony with pigeons in the dove-cot, who appear neither to fear or to avoid it.

The owl is a great favourite with me, and I like to see it flying softly and silently along the side of a hedge-row, or under a spreading oak, when

> The Moon, in maiden beauty, walks the blue
> And glorious canopy of crystal heaven,
> In purity supreme.

There are few scenes in nature more beautiful than a moon-light night, especially, when the glorious luminary may be seen apparently wading amidst the clouds, which sometimes obscure it, and as they hurry past, again bursting forth in all its beauty. The owl, the night-jar, the flitting bat, and even the sullen hum of the beetle, add to the charm of this nocturnal scenery. How cold must that heart be which is not then lifted up

with love and gratitude to the Great Creator, who, amongst his other blessings, has placed the moon as "an ornament in the high places of the Lord." Nor can we forget at such a moment, Pope's beautiful description of this luminary in his translation of Homer.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light;
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole;
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver ev'ry mountain's head;
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise;
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies;
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.

A huge Oak, dry and dead
Still clad with reliques of its trophies old,
Lifting to heaven its aged, hoary head—
With wreathed roots, and naked arms,
And trunk all rotten and unsound.

SPENSER.

It is an interesting fact that the morning after the king of Prussia arrived at Windsor Castle, in order to be present at the christening of the Prince of Wales, the whole of His Majesty's suite, including the celebrated Baron Humboldt, enquired their way to Herne's Oak. This was the first object of their attention and curiosity, and probably of their veneration. The splendours of the castle, its pictures, the noble scenery surrounding it, and the many historical facts connected with it, were objects of inferior interest, compared to a single withered, time-destroyed tree, yet rich with recollections of the genius of our immortal Shakspeare. On arriving at the sacred tree, it was gazed at in silence, but each of the party gathered a leaf from the ivy which is now clinging to the decaying trunk, as a relic which they intended to carry back to their own country, to be shewn there as one of no common

interest. The nobleman who accompanied the party to the tree, acquainted me with this little anecdote, and I must confess that it afforded me no small degree of gratification. Pleasing as it is to see foreigners hasten to look at a tree which our great bard has immortalized, it is still more so to have the perfect conviction, that if any tree in the park has a right to be considered as the real Herne's Oak, it is the tree in question. In a former work, I ventured to give this opinion, and facts which have since come to my knowledge have only served to confirm it. In that work, a very imperfect representation of the tree was given. By the kindness of Mr. Starke, whose paintings of forest scenery are so well known, and so highly appreciated, I am now enabled to give a more perfect, or rather, an exact one.

The discussion which has taken place with respect to the identity of the tree, has occasioned some degree of interest on the subject, nor do I think that that interest has yet subsided. At all events I feel sure, that the admirers of our immortal bard will thank me for my endeavours to prove the claim, which this tree has to be called "Herne's Oak."

The discussion I have referred to was commenced in an article in the Quarterly Review on Mr. Loudon's Arboretum, in which an attack,

not a very courteous one, was made upon me for the opinion I had given respecting this tree. To this I made a reply in the Times newspaper, stating some facts corroborating my former statement. The question was afterwards taken up in the Gentleman's Magazine, in which some one under the high-sounding title of "Plantagenet," first of all advocated my cause, and then published another letter in which he endeavoured to refute my arguments in favour of the present tree. This he did in consequence of having seen Collyer's Map of the Home Park, Windsor, in which a hand may be seen pointing to an oak in an avenue, and under it is written, "Sir John Falstaffe's Oak." As this avenue was marked as formed of a treble row of trees, the writer in the Gentleman's Magazine argued that the present tree must have stood in the centre row of trees, whereas that marked on Collyer's plan was in the exterior or outward row.

To say nothing of the accuracy of this plan, which is a very old one, it requires some degree of ingenuity to shew that the tree now standing in the avenue was not in the external row. By a reference to the plan, I am convinced that most people would think that there was no third row of trees at this place, and consequently that the present tree must be the one pointed out in the plan. By referring also to the accompanying

HERNE'S OAK

engraving of the tree, it will be seen that it has an inclination outwards. Those who are best acquainted with the growth of trees are aware that this inclination would not have taken place, had it been in the centre of an avenue, and another tree growing immediately before it in that direction.

Having made this explanation, I will now shortly state my reasons for the opinion I have formed that the tree now standing is the real Herne's Oak.

First:—The fact that the avenue in which the tree is now to be seen was planted by King William III. who delighted in straight lines, and the numerous avenues he made were all of them formed so, with the exception of the one in question. This is distorted, if I may call it so, evidently with the intention of introducing Herne's Oak into it, which is equidistant with the other trees of the avenue.

Secondly:—The evidence of Collyer's plan, which I cannot but think in favour of my supposition.

Thirdly:—The evidence of some old inhabitants of Windsor, especially of one, now in the ninety-fourth year of her age, who have assured me, that not only they, but their fathers and mothers also, have always had the present tree pointed out to them as Herne's Oak. This is going back to the time of William III.

Fourthly:—The fact that King George III. frequently asserted that he had cut down an oak tree, at the edge of the pit, close to the present tree, because many persons confounded it with the tree growing in the avenue, and called it Herne's Oak, which he said it was not. I have this anecdote from Mr. Davis, the present very popular and intelligent huntsman of Her Majesty's Stag-hounds, and who, it is well known, was in the habit, when a very young man, of being constantly in attendance upon His late Majesty, George III. That the tree thus cut down, was, by many persons, considered to be Herne's Oak, there can be no doubt, and under this impression, it was drawn by Mr. Delamotte in 1800, and by Mr. Nicholson, in the same year. It is evident, however, that the King did not so consider it, and that he was anxious to preserve the identity of the present tree. This fact is quite sufficient to disprove a statement in Mr. Knight's beautiful pictorial edition of Shakspeare, that Lady Ely was asked by Mr. Nicholson to ascertain from George III. whether or not he had cut down Herne's Oak. The King replied, that "when he was a young man, there were a number of old oaks in the Park, which had become unsightly objects, and that he gave directions that they should be removed. He was afterwards sorry that he had given such an order inadvertently, because he

found that, among the rest, the remains of Herne's Oak had been destroyed."

Either Mr. Crofton Croker, on whose authority this statement is made, must have misunderstood what Mr. Nicholson told him, or else Lady Ely had misrepresented to him, what the King had told her, supposing she had asked him the question, which may now be fairly doubted. It may be added that Mr. Davis assures me that he not only *frequently* heard the King assert that he had cut down the *supposititious* Herne's Oak, but that he repeated the assertion during a succession of years, when his mind and body were in a perfectly healthy state.

Fifthly:—The fact that the King placed the present tree under the especial charge of Mr. Engall, who is still the manager of the Home Park, forty years ago, telling him at the time that it was Herne's Oak. It may be added, on the same authority, that some chairs were made from the supposititious Herne's Oak, and presented to the King, as interesting relics of that tree, but which he refused to accept, stating that Herne's Oak was still standing. Many things, also, were made from the tree and sold to various persons in the neighbourhood, which left the impression that Herne's Oak had been felled.

Sixthly:—A statement which I know was made by His late Majesty, George IV., that

Herne's Oak had not been cut down by his father, and which has been confirmed to me by one of the surviving members of his family.

Seventhly: — The present appearance of the tree would serve to prove that it might have remained in nearly the state, in which we now see it, through a long succession of ages. I remember, a few years ago, going to see a fine sound oak, of about the same girth, a few minutes after it had been struck with lightning. It was in Richmond Park. The bark had been stripped, with the leaves completely pulverized. Not one of the smaller branches was to be seen. Some of the larger ones were riven and thrown to a considerable distance, but the trunk was left, having only two or three naked arms remaining upon it, and no appearance of vitality to shew how lately it had been a flourishing and beautiful ornament of the Park, except some sparkling drops of sap which oozed from the tree, and looked like tears trickling down the sturdy stem, as if it were weeping over its premature fate;—

> Black from the stroke above, the smould'ring oak
> Stands a sad shatter'd trunk.

That this trunk would have remained in that state during many centuries, there can be little doubt, and this, I think, might have been the case with Herne's Oak. It had evidently been "blasted,"

but the external wood is still sound, and long may it remain so.

I might, multiply my reasons for considering the present tree as the real Herne's Oak, by quoting the opinions of the late amiable Sir Herbert Taylor, Sir David Dundas, and others on the subject, but perhaps enough has been said. I may however add, that Mr. Gilpin, in his work on Forest Scenery, tells us that Herne's Oak is still supposed to exist. He adds, that "in the Little Park of Windsor there is a walk, known by the name of Queen Elizabeth's Walk. It consists of elms, among which is a single oak, taken into the row, as if particularly meant to be distinguished at the time when the walk or avenue was made. It is a large tree, measuring twenty-four feet in circumference." In consequence of this statement I caused the tree to be measured, the day I am writing this, by a respectable carpenter, used to measure timber. He tells me that it girts at the end of the trunk, twenty-one feet, and that allowing for the bark which was on it, in the year 1792 or 3, when Mr. Gilpin wrote his account, it would have had a girth of twenty-three feet at least, so nearly does it agree with Mr. Gilpin's statement, and which, by the way, was written some years before either Mr. Delamotte or Mr. Nicholson drew the supposititious oak, already referred to. The present tree must, therefore, once have been

a very large and noble one. Compared with the girth of two or three near it, it is seen now to disadvantage, but it should be recollected that these other trees are pollards, and the very circumstance of trees having been deprived of their leading branches, through a succession of years, which has not been the case with Herne's Oak, always increases the size of their trunks.

I can again only express my hope, that the arguments I have made use of will not be unacceptable to the admirers of Shakspeare. Even if I could be proved to be wrong, I do not see what object would be gained by the endeavours to destroy the interest, which would otherwise be attached to this last relic of our immortal bard. I may appear obstinate, or too persevering in my wish to rescue it from oblivion and neglect, but as long as I feel that I have the best of the argument, I will maintain my ground.

In order that the tree may now be readily recognized by strangers, I have had the following quotation affixed to it: —

> There is an old tale goes, that Herne the hunter,
> Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
> Doth all the winter time, at still midnight,
> Walk round about *this* oak.

I am assured that since this inscription has been put on the tree, some females, who were in the habit of passing between Windsor and Datchet,

through the Park at night, have been alarmed with the fear of meeting "Herne the hunter." If this be so, it curiously shows the unexpected fact, that superstition holds the same sway in this neighbourhood that it did, when Shakspeare made Mrs. Page (and she is speaking two centuries before his time) say,

> there want not many that do fear,
> In deep of night to walk by this Herne's Oak.

Doth she not sooth us, sick; enrich us, poor,
And banish death and misery from our door;
Doth she not cherish every moment's bliss
And make an Eden of a world like this?
When care would strive with us his watch to keep,
Doth she not sing the snarling fiend to sleep?

CRABBE.

I HAVE always much pleasure in watching the unwearying and indefatigable exertions of swallows, wag-tails, and other insectivorous birds, in providing food for their young. Were it not for the affection parents feel for their offspring, the present sources of happiness, as regards the human as well as the animal species, would be annihilated. In order to keep alive this feeling, two most powerful motives have been implanted in females. I mean those of love and pity. No sooner is the feeble and plaintive cry of distress of their young heard by the parent, than these two incentives are immediately called into action. Pity prompts the female to afford the necessary relief, and love renders the task, however arduous, a pleasurable one. I never think of this interesting fact, without admiring that law of nature, or rather of a beneficent Creator, who has thus provided for the wants of the young in their

most helpless state, and thrown the shield of affection over them. What perseverance, anxiety and courage are shewn by the parent in providing for, and defending her young, and at the same time what an absence of all selfishness! When they are in danger, the most fearful female becomes the bravest. Affection then appears in its strongest light. We may see a feeble bird, a timid quadruped, a little insect, sacrifice even life itself in defence of its young.

Let us view a mother watching over a sick and helpless child which requires all her care and attention. How delightfully has Providence smoothed the path of the parent in this case. Instead of anxiety, fatigue and constant watching and attention becoming insupportable or irksome, we find that affection overcomes every difficulty, and that parental care is bestowed with cheerfulness and pleasure.

It is pleasant to reflect on the perfection of the female character — to indulge in the remembrance of having seen women perform those offices of affection and love, which they alone are capable of shewing. If we refer to the Bible, how delightfully are their best attributes there pourtrayed, and how conspicuous are they for the warmest and kindliest feelings. It was a woman who watched over her little brother when he was hidden in the bull-rushes. — It was a woman who

urged her father to perform his vow, although her own life might be the sacrifice. — It was a woman who so beautifully said, "all was well," when she came to implore the prophet to restore her dead and only son. — It was a woman who followed her mother-in-law in all her distress and poverty. — It was a woman who offered her last mite in charity. — It was a woman who washed our blessed Saviour's feet with her tears, and afterwards wiped them with the hair of her head. — It was a woman who said, "Lord, if thou had'st been here, my brother had not died." — It was a woman who stood at the foot of the cross. — It was a woman who went first to the sepulchre. — It was to a woman our Lord first made himself known after his resurrection; and, it was not a woman who betrayed our Lord and master.

Charming, however, as the female character may be, it possesses another quality which has not yet been referred to. I allude to that extraordinary tenderness and affection, which a mother generally shews to a deformed, diseased, or idiotic child. That this feeling has been implanted in her by a merciful Creator for a benevolent purpose, cannot, I think, be doubted, nor can I imagine any being more wretched than one, in any of the conditions I have mentioned, deserted by its mother, and deprived of her tenderness and care. Even some animals shew the same affection under

almost similar circumstances. I have watched a little feeble bird on a lawn, which some accident or disorder has rendered weaker than the other nestlings, receiving the constant attentions of its mother, who hovered near it, and evidently brought food to it oftener than she did to her other young ones. I have noticed the same in a weakly Fawn. When I resided on the border of Bushy Park, I had many opportunities of observing this, and other instances of the great affection which exists between a Doe and her Fawn. The latter, when very young, hides itself among the fern, but on hearing the peculiar bleat of the dam, recognized from amongst many others, it quits its retreat, and is in an instant by her side. A scene of mutual affection then takes place. The fawn rubs its head against the shoulder of its mother. The mother licks the fawn, then satisfies its hunger, and turns round and looks at it with an affection which cannot be mistaken.

Throughout nearly the whole of the animal creation, the care of rearing, feeding and protecting the young devolves on the female. She it is who hatches the young brood, and fosters them under her wings. In some cases, her indefatigable exertions procure the necessary supply of food. In others her milk nourishes them; but the same love and affection is to be found in all. The Whale, amidst its agonies of pain and

death, is said to attend to her young one with the utmost anxiety to the last moment of her life. If the young whale has been wounded by the harpoon, after the mother has eluded it, the latter then becomes an easy prey to the whalers, as it is well known that nothing will induce her to desert her offspring: so strong is female affection.

I am furnished with another instance of this in my immediate neighbourhood. A number of school-boys, attended by their master, were wandering about the Great Park of Windsor, when one of them discovered a Black-bird's nest, with young ones in it, at some distance beyond the top of the Long Walk. He immediately made prize of it, and was conveying it homewards, when the cries of their young were heard by the old birds. Notwithstanding the presence and noise of so many boys, they did not desert their helpless offspring, but kept near them, for a distance of about three miles, flying from tree to tree, and uttering those distressed and wailing notes which are so peculiar in the black-bird. This circumstance induced the boy to place the young birds in a cage, and he hung it outside of the house, which was close to the town of Windsor. Here they were fed regularly by their parents. As they grew up, the boy sold first one and then another, as he was able to procure customers for them, until

they were all disposed of. The morning after the last bird was sold, the female black-bird was found dead beneath the cage in which her beloved offspring had been confined, as if she had been unable to survive their loss. So strong indeed is the attachment of these birds for their young, that a boy was struck violently on the head by one of them, while he had a young black-bird in his hand, which he was taking from a nest.

The affection of animals is not confined entirely to their kind and offspring. A clergyman informed me, that when he resided at Cambridge, he had a young Stock-dove given to him, which soon became extremely attached to him. It roosted in an open cage in his hall, and always recognized, with great joy, his ring at the house-bell. As he had long journies to make, it was often late at night when he reached home. On these occasions, the instant he rang the bell, the bird would descend from its cage, run along the hall with extended and quivering wings, hop upon his shoulder, cooing, and fondling him with its wings, and exhibiting the utmost pleasure and delight.

There is a bird who by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow;
A great frequenter of the church,
Where bishop-like he finds a perch
And dormitory too.

. . . . .

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men,
And, sick of having seen them,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between them.

COWPER.

WHEN conversing, as I frequently do, with a variety of persons on the subject of Natural History, I almost invariably find, that whenever the reasoning faculty of animals is brought forward as a matter of discussion, there is either an incredulous smile, or a disbelief expressed of the fact that any thing approaching to reason can be found in animals. As many proofs, however, to the contrary have been sent to me, and as I have witnessed not a few myself, I shall mention some of them. I am at the same time aware that such is the feeling of superiority with which we regard ourselves, that we are but little inclined to allow

even a portion of reason to any creature below us in the scale of creation. Yet that something approaching to it is to be found in animals cannot by me be doubted. The following curious and interesting fact, seen by many in this neighbourhood is the first proof I will bring forward.

A friend called upon me on the 11th day of last May, and asked me to accompany him to Eton College to see a curious bird's nest. We accordingly proceeded thither, and, having passed through the beautiful Chapel attached to that College, ascended the winding steps of the bell-tower or turret of the chapel. After getting to a considerable height, any further progress was stopped by a sort of pillar built of sticks. The staircase was sufficiently lighted to afford complete observation of the proceedings of the birds, which I will now endeavour accurately to describe.

On the ledge of one of the narrow apertures for the admission of light, a pair of jackdaws had built their nest. The ledge however was so narrow, that the nest had evidently an inclination inwards, and would probably without some support have fallen down upon the steps below. In order to obviate this difficulty, they contrived the following ingenious method of supporting the nest. As the staircase was a spiral one, the birds began to make a pillar of sticks on that identical

step, which alone would give them the best foundation for their intended work. Had they gone to the one above, or to the one below that which they had so sagaciously fixed upon, it was very evident that they would not have acquired that precise slope or angle for their pillar, which was necessary for the effectual support of the nest. It was the eighth step below the opening, and from it the pillar was raised to a heighth of exactly ten feet, and was composed of a strong stack-like work of sticks. The nest then rested upon the top of it, and was perfectly secure. The labour, which these ingenious and industrious birds had bestowed in the collection of so large a mass of sticks, must have been enormous. One circumstance struck me as very curious. The entrance of the aperture in the wall was very narrow; the difficulty of conveying some of the larger sticks through it must have been consequently great. On examining the sticks, I found that each of them had been broken, or rather cracked exactly in the centre, so that they could be doubled up. They were thus also the better adapted for the construction of the stack in a compact form. The accompanying sketch, for which I am indebted to the kindness of a lady at Eton, will perhaps give a better idea of the position of the nest and the pillar of sticks, than my description of them. I

should add that the birds were occupied during seventeen days in the performance of their laborious task. It was much to be regretted that the eager curiosity of so many persons to see the architecture of these indefatigable birds, and the circumstance of the nest having been roughly handled by some incautious visitor, occasioned the architects to abandon all their labours, and to seek for some more secure retreat in which they could hatch their eggs, and bring up their young.

The above circumstantial account, of what I cannot but consider a curious fact in Natural History, appears to me to prove the possession by these birds of a faculty of the same kind, as that which in its higher degree we call *reason*. Before this opinion is condemned, the instinctive habits of these birds should be duly considered. Their most usual places for building their nests, are holes in trees, in the towers of churches or old buildings, and amongst high cliffs. They have also been known, in districts thin of trees, to build under ground in rabbit burrows. Now with these habits, which are their natural and instinctive ones, the deviation from them as in the present instance, shews a faculty of forethought, reflection, plan and contrivance, which could not have been derived from mere instinct. If this is admitted, the possession of reasoning faculties must be allowed.

Let me now produce another well authenticated instance of this power.

Sir Walter Scott was heard to say, that he would believe any thing of a St. Bernard's dog, but there are other dogs endowed with equal sense.

A party had gone out rabbit shooting, accompanied by a small spaniel. While in pursuit of a rabbit, she fell into an old coal pit full of water, to within seven feet of the brink. The dog swam about till nearly exhausted, when she was seen to make frequent but vain attempts to extricate herself by catching at a twig, which hung over the pit and was near the water. This suggested the idea of making the animal's sagacity the means of saving its life. The handkerchiefs of the shooting party were tied together, which, a small knot being made at the end, were let down to her. With the utmost quickness of perception she instantly seized the knot in her mouth, and held on till she was drawn out of the pit.

A friend of mine had a brother, a rigid Catholic, who resided a few miles from his house. He kept the forty days of Lent with the utmost strictness, so that but little was to be found in his house during that period except fish, eggs and vegetables. He had a favorite old fox-hound, a parlour dog, who shewed his dislike to this fare, by always coming to my friend's house during

the season of Lent, and when it was over, he made his way back to that of his old master.

The following well authenticated account of the sagacity of a dog was published in the Scotsman, by an eye witness, of which there were several, on board a steamer as it passed down the Clyde.

As the steamer approached a particular place, a small dog, apparently a terrier, was seen to issue from a bothy used by the Salmon fishermen, and wade into the water till nothing was seen but its head. It however immediately returned with the end of the rope to which the net-floats are fixed, which the dog carried a considerable distance upon the ground, where he left it high and dry. Now, as every one must know, just before the advance of a steam-boat in a narrow river, the water, owing to the action of the paddles, suddenly subsides, and as suddenly again rushes in violent waves above the water-mark. Had not the dog been aware of this, and taken the precaution he did, the rope and floats would to a certainty have been carried off.

A beggar made his way into the court-yard of an acquaintance of mine. One of his dogs barked at and attempted to bite him, and the beggar struck at him with his stick several times. On the servant making his appearance, the dog ceased barking, and watching his opportunity, he got be-

hind the beggar, snatched the stick from his hand, and carried it into the road where he left it.

I will now give an extract from a letter, sent to me by a respectable gentleman in Scotland, which would appear to prove that even fish are possessed of a reasoning faculty.

"I was ordered to take the cutter I commanded to Port Nessock, near Port Patrick. On landing, I was informed of Colonel Mc Dowell's sea fish-pond and went to look at it. On arriving, I fed the large Cod out of my hand from some mussels which I had in a basin. I purposely, however, retained one mussel in the basin, and offered it to the cod in order to see how, with its broad mouth and short tongue, it would reach it. The cod blew into the basin (a small slop basin) and the reaction forced the mussel out of it, and the cod seized it immediately. This fish allowed me to pat it on the back, and rested its head on the stone upon which I was standing just like a dog. The other fish came to me and fed on the mussels I threw to them, but would not let me handle them though I patted some of them."

The late amiable and excellent Sir Herbert Taylor informed me of the following fact.

When he resided at Fan Grove, near Chertsey, in Surrey, he had a Cow which was in the constant habit of turning the handle of a turnip-slicer, when the hopper had any turnips in it. The cow would

then feed on the turnips which had dropped out. When these were consumed, she would turn the handle again.

An old coach-dog, belonging to a lady of my acquaintance, was so perfectly aware of the pace he would have to go when she used her four horses, that when he got old, as he could not keep up with them, he never went out except when a pair only was used.

The following fact, the accuracy of which may readily be ascertained, shews not only reflection approaching to reason, but a kindness of disposition and a degree of humanity, which many persons will not give animals credit for. The Earl of Albemarle has a very fine breed of black and tan spaniels remarkable for their beauty and intelligence, one of these died in bringing forth a litter of puppies. The cries of these blind and helpless animals excited the sympathy of a young bitch of the same breed, who never had had any puppies herself. She fostered them as if she had been their mother, and, to the surprize of every one, she had a flow of milk after a short time, which enabled her to support and bring up her charge. This extraordinary fact, which I witnessed myself, cannot be said to have been occasioned by mere instinct. Here was an absence of that *notus odor*, which enables an animal to distinguish its own young from that of others. There

was an absence also of that nourishment, the pressure of which makes the suckling their young so delightful to animals, and which perhaps is the primary cause of the great affection they have for them. To what then shall we attribute the extraordinary care and affection shewn by one poor animal for the offspring of another? * Surely the usually defined bounds of instinct were exceeded, and a reasoning faculty was evidently demonstrated.

When we examine the habits of

> the pretty choristers of flight,
> That chaunt their music notes on ev'ry bush,

we shall generally find, that instinct guides them to conceal their nests, or to cover them with substances closely assimilating to surrounding objects. When, however, we see these general habits departed from, — when we see the external appearance of a nest completely altered after it has been discovered, or curious devices resorted to in order to conceal it, a certain degree of reason may be perceived to have guided the birds in these operations. Nor is the reasoning faculty of some

* As a doubt of the accuracy of this anecdote has been expressed, I have only to say that Sir Watkin Williams Wynn gives me his authority to state, that at this time he has at least three bitches, who never having had whelps, are suckling those of others, and that the fact is perfectly well known in all large kennels.

insects less wonderful. I do not refer to those, extraordinary as is the fact, who thrust a caterpillar into a cell previously made, and then deposit an egg upon it, which serves from its moisture not only to bring the egg to maturity, but for the future wasp to feed upon; or to the curious economy of bees and ants, partaking as it does, of contrivances, plans, and internal arrangements which have both surprized and attracted the attention of persons in all ages. But when we find bees building regular fortifications before the entrance of their hives, or witness that power of communication, which ants possess by means of their antennæ, through which their wants and wishes are made known to each other, we must confess that there is something beyond mere instinct that influences their operations.

I might multiply examples to a great extent in order to prove the existence of a reasoning faculty in the animal creation. But enough has been said to illustrate my theory, and I will conclude with a remark of Mr. Smellie's.

"Brutes, like men, learn to see objects in their proper position, to judge of distances and heights, and of hurtful, pleasurable, or indifferent bodies. Without some portion of reason, therefore, they would never acquire the faculty of making a proper use of their senses. A dog, though pressed with hunger, will not seize a piece of meat in the

presence of his master, unless it be given him; but with his eyes, his movements and his voice, he makes the most humble and expressive petition. If this balancing of motives be not reasoning, I know not by what other name it can be called."

A barren and detested vale, you see it is;
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O'ercome with moss, and baneful mistletoe.

SHAKSPEARE.

WE might almost suppose that Shakspeare took the above description of trees "o'ercome" with mistletoe from those which may now be seen in the Home Park, Windsor. So completely has the mistletoe taken possession of them, that they have become ragged, "forlorn and lean." Our great bard must have been a close observer of nature, for it is in summer more particularly that the baneful effects of this parasite on trees is conspicuous. It is then that the dead and decaying branches, which the mistletoe has deprived of their usual nourishment, can be contrasted with those which shew more life and vigour. This is the case with the lime trees in "Datchet mead," a place so often mentioned in the Merry Wives of Windsor. It is always pleasing to trace Shakspeare's knowledge of particular localities, and even to fancy that he formed his ideas from facts connected with them.

I have never yet met with any trees so much infested with mistletoe, as those I have referred

to, and it is difficult to assign a reason why this should be the case. In winter the trees appear as if they were covered with rooks' nests, when seen from a short distance, and it is evident that they are rapidly decaying.

Persuaded, as I am, that every thing has been created for some good and benevolent purpose, I was not long in discovering what appeared to me to be the intended use of the mistletoe, and if my supposition is correct, it affords another proof of the care of Almighty God for his creatures. The seeds of this plant ripen very late, viz. between February and April, and are not willingly fed upon by birds as long as they can procure the berries of hawthorn, hollies, ivy, and other winter food. No sooner, however, does a late frost set in, and the ground become covered with snow in the Spring, as is often the case, than birds flock to the mistletoe, and find a ready resource thus left them when all others have failed. If its berries ripened early, and were a favourite food of birds, the benevolent design of the Great Creator would not have been as effective as it is by the present beautiful organization of the plant. If we thus see the birds of the air provided for by the merciful and kind arrangements of our heavenly Father, we have every reason to place ourselves with confidence in His hands, and to trust to His care.

Having had my attention thus drawn to the mis-

tletoe, I have endeavoured to ascertain on what species of trees it has been found, and especially whether or not it has ever been met with on the Oak in this country, a fact of which many doubts have been expressed. My official situation has enabled me to have enquiries made on this subject in the Royal forests, and parks, but I could never hear of any instance of its having been found on the oak in any of them. Timber merchants have also assured me that they never had seen it on an oak. Last year, however, a part of the branch of an oak tree was sent me from the neighbourhood of Godalming in Surry, with the mistletoe growing on it. Although it was not cut from the sacred tree with a golden sickle, as the Druids are said to have cut it, yet it served to prove a very doubtful fact. Since that time, two or three other instances have been communicated to me, and I now, therefore, feel myself justified in adding it to the following list of trees, on which the mistletoe has been found growing, and which I hope will not be considered either as uninteresting, or useless.

LIST OF TREES ON WHICH THE MISTLETOE HAS BEEN FOUND, WITH SOME OF THEIR LOCALITIES.

Oak.—Near Godalming, Surrey;—At Penporthleuny, parish of Goitre, Monmouthshire. Also

on one near Usk, and another at St. Dial's near Monmouth.

Horse Chestnut—Avenue in Bushy Bark, Middlesex. This is the only instance in which I have met with it.

Lime tree—Windsor Home Park, Hampton Court Park, and in most places where the lime tree is found.

Wych Elm — In the Wilderness of Hampton Court Gardens. The only instance I am acquainted with.

Mountain Ash — Hampton Court Park — not, I believe, common on this tree.

Maple (acer opalus) — Bushy Park, Middlesex.

Red Swamp Maple (acer rubrum) — Ranger's House, Bushy Park. I believe a rare instance.

Common Maple (acer campestre) — Richmond Park, and in many other places.

White Poplar (populus alba) — Very common all round Windsor.

Black Poplar (populus nigra) — Sutton Place, Surrey, and between Caerleon and Usk, Monmouthshire. De Candolle mentions it as being found in France.

Lombardy Poplar (populus fastigiata) — Found in France; on the authority of De Candolle.

Acacia — Slopes, Windsor Home Park, and the Stud House grounds, Hampton Court Park.

Laburnum — Hampton Court Gardens, and the Slopes, Windsor Home Park.

Common Hazel — Neighbourhood of Godalming, Surrey, and Melverley, Shropshire. The only two places in which I have heard of it.

White-thorn — Abundant every where.

Apple — Very common.

Crab — Very common.

Siberian Crab.

Pear — Authority, Mr. Loudon — Locality not given.

White-beam (Pyrus aria) — Cobham, Kent, in a tree near the Church Yard — very rare.

Large leaved Sallow (Salix caprea) — Wood Rising, Norfolk. In the garden of the Rev. A. Roberts.

White Willow (Salix alba) — France — De Candolle.

Locust-tree (robinia pseudo-acacia) — In immense abundance at Ampthill, Bedfordshire, also in Stud House grounds, Hampton Court Park. De Candolle mentions it as being found in France.

Larch — Plentiful at Cold Weston, Shropshire.

Scotch Fir — Neighbourhood of Magdeburg in immense quantities — authority, Mr. Loudon.

Spruce Fir — France — authority, De Candolle.

Ash — Monmouthshire — Rev. I. Herbert, and in France, according to De Candolle.

Service (Pyrus domestica) — Authority, Dr. Hooper.
Horn-beam (Carpinus ostrya) — Dr. Hooper.
Elm — Monmouthshire — Rev. I. Herbert, and at Strensham Court, Worcestershire. (Mr. Taylor.)
Loranthus Europæus — (itself a parasite.) Pollini in the Flora of Verona.
Olive.
Vine — Italy — authority, Brassavol.
Walnut — France — authority, De Candolle.
Plum (Prunus domestica) — Ditto.
Common Laurel — In this country. The person who saw it forgets the locality, but his authority may be depended on.
Medlar — France — authority, De Candolle.
Grey Poplar — authority, Sir W. Hooker.

A gentleman in Shropshire caused the seeds of the mistletoe to germinate on the oak, several of the pine tribe, cherry, common laurel, Portugal laurel, holly, lime, elms, horn-beam, birch, sycamore, ash, chestnut, hazel, and acacia, as well as the apple, pear, and white thorn tribe. On these latter they continue to grow luxuriantly, but on the resinous trees, they did germinate, but took little or no hold. On the gummy trees they throve a little better, and on the others better still, but on all, except on their usual "foster-nurses,"

the apple and pear tribe, they soon sickened and died.

It appears that the mistletoe has been found more frequently on the oak in England than in France, as Desfontaines mentions that the only instance, which ever came under his notice, is a specimen, with the branch, preserved in the Museum at Paris, and which came from Bourgogne.

Many persons suppose that glutinous or viscous seeds must undergo a certain process, such as passing through the stomachs of birds, or being buried for a certain time in heaps, so as to go through a certain degrèe of fermentation, before they will vegetate. If, however, the berries of the mistletoe are rubbed upon the branches of trees, when they are quite ripe, which they are between the months of February and April, they may be readily cultivated.

Any addition to the above list will be thankfully received, and may be communicated to the Author at the Publisher's.

It may be as well to caution my readers not to introduce the mistletoe into their orchards, if they have any value for their fruit trees. A Clergyman in Norfolk, to whom I am indebted for much pleasing information, has done this but too successfully. He writes me word that his trees are so full of it, that they form a great portion of the foliage on two or three of them, and the others are

much infested with it. He also asks me whether the sex of the mistletoe is likely to be determined by the tree on which it grows.* It is, perhaps, a fact worth mentioning, that the mistletoe has never been known to grow in Ireland.

* "The mistletoe grows on the *oaks* in the Peninsula of India"—See Murray's Demonstration of Evidence of Revelation, p. 241, ed. 1840. The same friend, who has pointed out the above passage to my notice, also observes, that in the correspondence of the late Sir James Smith (1, p. 460) is the following account of this plant:—"The oaks in the Arcadian mountains presented them with the true ancient mistletoe (loranthus Europæus,) while our mistletoe (viscum album) grows only on the silver fir." See also Tournefort's Tour in the Levant, vol. 3, p. 279. A dissertation on the medicinal properties of the mistletoe was published in 1729, by Sir John Albatch; and a treatise on Epilepsy, and the use of the viscus quercinus, or mistletoe of the oak, in the cure of that disease, by Henry Fraser, M.D. 1806. See also Plinii Nat. Hist. Lib. xvi. 95. The mistletoe must grow on the oak in the Morea, as it is called in Laconia ἰξίοδρυς. This is the viscum album. This plant grows on Parnassus, and is gathered by the herdsmen as food for the labouring oxen: it is called by the modern Greeks μέλλα. See Walpole's Memoirs of European Turkey, p. 281; and Falconer's tracts on Natural History, from the Writers of Antiquity, 4to. 1793. The loranthus is called ὄξος; a name wrongly given by Linnæus to the viscum. See Falconer (Tab. Alt.) p. 189.

'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
. . . Hence the glossy kind
Try ev'ry winning way inventive love
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates,
Pour forth their little souls.

THOMSON.

MUCH has been written respecting the song of birds, some attributing it to one cause, and some to another. The following interesting and authentic anecdote may, perhaps, throw some light on the subject.

A gentleman of my acquaintance had an American Mocking-bird, in such health and vigour, that it was either constantly singing, or else imitating the various sounds it heard. In order to try the powers of this bird, its owner purchased a fine sky-lark. When placed in the same room with the mocking-bird, the song of the former was heard to echo through the house, as if it were chaunting "on fluttering wing" its well known welcome to the rising sun. The mocking-bird was silent for some time, but at last burst forth in the strains of the "aerial songster," but louder and clearer, as if mounting and stretching its wings towards heaven. The lark was silent from

that moment, nor was a joyous note ever heard from it afterwards.

Wishing to test the powers of the mocking-bird still further, an unusually large price was given for a black-bird, celebrated for its vocal powers. It was placed in the same room with the mocking-bird; early on the second morning, its song was resumed, and its charming notes were warbled forth with all the sweetness and modulations, which may be heard in its native "thorny brakes." The mocking-bird listened, and was silent for some time, then all at once the blackbird's notes were heard to issue forth, but sweeter and louder than those of the woodland songster. The poor blackbird heard them, felt that it was conquered, remained silent, drooped, pined, and died.

From the above facts, emulation would seem to be one of the existing causes of the song of birds. When their powers are excelled, they appear to feel the disgrace of being conquered, and to lose all inclination to renew their former efforts. When the Nightingale first arrives, which is generally about the first week in April, it immediately begins to sing its song of love, in order to attract the notice of the female, whose appearance takes place sometimes three weeks after that of the male, as was the case this spring (1843). At this time, two nightingales may be heard pouring forth their delightful notes, both day and night;

near each other. When a female arrives, a contest takes place for her, and when her choice has been made, the rejected bird quits the locality, and resumes its song in some other quarter. In this instance there is evident emulation, as if the loudest and most continuous songster had the best chance of bearing off the prize. During the period of incubation, the song is neither so frequent nor so loud as before, and is certainly not an emulative one. We may fancy it the song of satisfaction and happiness, or as intended to cheer the female during the performance of her task, as well as to assure her of the presence of her faithful partner.

Caged birds may frequently be observed to sing from emulation, and this, I think, is the case with our charming Sedge-warbler. Whoever has passed along the river Thames on some silvery moon-lit night in summer, will have observed that the least noise has caused these warblers to pour forth their song on some of the little aits, each endeavouring to exceed the other in the loudness and continuity of it. A stone thrown amongst the willows, or the sudden splash of the oar near the ait, instantly causes them to sing with renewed energy. In the autumn, I have frequently observed two Robins singing like jealous rivals near each other, and then suddenly begin a fight, which often ends in the death of one of them.

How different is the case with my favourite Swallow. No angry or jealous passion disturbs it, nor is there the least appearance of emulation in its song; on the contrary, it "twitters sweetly" from feelings of happiness and complacency, which cannot be mistaken, now and then darting to the nest, and uttering that little note of love, which I am so fond of hearing, and which is responded to by the female, while she is performing her allotted task of incubation. Gentle bird! it is a thousand pities, that you are often so wantonly destroyed, and that you are not permitted to rear your young in those sunny spots, which you have selected for the purpose. Gladly would I afford you the shelter of my projecting roof, where your clay-built nest should be protected from harm, and you might please me with your airy evolutions, and your pretty songs;—

> I delight to see
> How suddenly he skims the glassy pool,
> How quaintly dips, and with an arrow's speed
> Whisks by. I love to be awake, and hear
> His morning song twitter'd to dawning day.*

But amongst our charming song-birds, I must not omit the Black-cap, which is, I think, quite on an equality with the nightingale. Its song does not appear to be emulous, but, as Mr. White observes, it pours forth very sweet, but inward

* HURDIS.

melody, and expresses a great variety of gentle modulations, superior, perhaps, to any of our warblers, the nightingale excepted. Mr. Symes thought that its mellow notes are equal, if not superior in richness of tone, to any in the nightingale's song, and in this opinion I perfectly agree with him. Mr. Sweet says, that the black-cap is a real mocking-bird, imitating the note of any bird it chances to hear sing. Few people, indeed, are aware that many of our British birds may be so called. There is at this time a wild Starling to be seen and heard amongst the trees near the Cumberland Lodge gardens, which imitates the notes of the blackbird, thrush and other birds, and also the hooting of an owl. This he does so exactly, that persons thought an owl was hooting in the day time, till the starling was detected in the act of doing it. Blackbirds certainly may be called mocking birds, and I have also heard a Jackdaw imitate noises he has heard.* It is probable that if more attention was paid to the notes of birds, which are suffered to remain unmolested about farm yards and frequented places, many of them would be found to be imitative. It is clear, I

* A friend observed a young Jay in one of the aviaries in the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, warbling in a soft under tone the song of the Robin. This the bird continued to do for several minutes, during successive times. He directed the attention of his companion to the bird, and also that of the keeper of the birds, who had not previously observed it.

think, from what has been stated, that love is not the only incentive of the song in birds.

Every lover of nature delights in the vocal concerts of our woods and hedge-rows, and dull would be our walks and rides in the spring and summer without them. They seem to have been intended by our benevolent Creator to cheer the poor labourer of the fields during his daily task; to remind him that he, as well as the songsters around him, are under His especial care, and also to afford a lesson to the more prosperous, that they, like the fowls of the air, should offer up their daily tribute of gratitude for the blessings bestowed upon them.

All birdes with tunefull bosoms sing,
The blackbirde makes the woodes to ring:
The thrush, the jay, and she in spring
Who rues the rape of Thrace's king.

Their shrill notes to the musicke plying,
Then all the different flowers descrying,
The odours in abundance flying,
Prov'd it the bowre of love's soft-lying.*

* Old Poem.

Observe the streams and see them silent go —
See on the banks a thousand beauties grow,
Which the Creator did, in mighty love bestow
On man.
I'll shew you all the pleasures of the stream
Under that shady Oak — "there we'll repose."

OLD POEM.

THERE is a freshness, a repose, an indescribable enjoyment of solitude on the banks of a clear and placid river, which a lover of nature can alone sufficiently appreciate. The air is so pure on a fine morning in the spring, her breath so sweet as it passes through the snowy hawthorn bushes, the sloping hills are so varied with trees and flowers, and the meadows so fresh and gay, that cold must that heart be, and insensible to the charms of river-scenery, that does not enjoy such a spot, and look around him with delight. Those who have wandered on the banks of my favourite Avon, as it flows through the borders of the New Forest, and seen its clear and sparkling waters passing over the long and yielding rushes, which sometimes shew themselves above the surface, and then gently hide themselves as some dragon-fly settles upon them — those that have watched the graceful bendings of the stream, sometimes

opening into shallow *broads* covered with ephemeræ, and then narrowing into deeper and more rapid channels, will have experienced the quiet enjoyment of the scenery of one of our most beautiful rivers.

The English, perhaps, more than any other nation, are capable of appreciating the charms of nature, and those thousand beauties which are to be found in our little sequestered dells, and in the smiling vallies through which many of our pretty streamlets find their way. The satisfaction and complacency, which arise from a contemplation of the beauties of the works of creation, — our walks in verdant fields and shady woods, — the song of birds, and the calmness and stillness of nature in her more retired spots, all these have been dwelt upon and described both by naturalists and poets. It is indeed impossible to see the verdure of our meadows, to hear the melodious songs of birds, to witness the fertility of the earth, and to view the order and economy which pervade all nature, without feelings of delight and gratification. With these feelings we enter into the charms of Walton's pastoral, and set a true value on the tranquil pursuits of Gilbert White.

But it is to the honest and patient Angler, that such scenes afford the greatest enjoyment and admiration. Far removed from the noise and turmoil of the world, he prepares his rod, and while

standing on the banks of the stream, with the speckled trouts rising freely around him, he "tastes the unrifled freshness of the air," and is thankful for the innocent enjoyment he is partaking of.

We have often thought, that the amusement of angling has been too much despised by those, who are not anglers themselves. If all the pleasure of the pursuit consisted in dragging a fish to shore, or in watching a float to see it go under water, we might join in the ridicule which has been bestowed on "the brethren of the rod and line." The pleasure of angling, however, takes a far wider range, and we are convinced that the mere act of fishing is only a secondary consideration with those, who join with it a fondness for the charms of nature. The enjoyment of air and exercise, as the Angler pursues his course through flowery meadows and fields covered with herds and flocks, listening to the unseen lark, or watching the varied movements of the swallows, as they glide around him in every direction, have charms which add a relish to his walk, and harmonize with every kindly feeling of his heart. Nor is this all. A reflective angler will derive many useful lessons of instruction from the visible objects of creation which surround him, all of which serve to prove the infinite perfection and unbounded benevolence of the Great Creator. This after all, should be the chief object of those who "tread the dewy lawns,"

and who will perceive the various and curious contrivances of nature to preserve even a little fragile and delicate moss on some bleak and barren rock. In viewing the "ample sky," or following the windings of some pretty streamlet, as it waters its banks, gay with our native flowers, we may learn to be humble, and by reflecting on our own insignificance, may be taught the grand secret of human existence — that of preparing for our last great change. The very revolutions of nature, the ephemeræ, dancing in the sun-beams, independent of all other consideration, must teach us to expect it.

Amongst those who found "books in the running brooks" was Izaak Walton. He, perhaps, more than any other writer, appreciated the delight of strolling on the banks of a river. His charming pastoral is a proof of this, and we are convinced that he merely made angling a secondary consideration in describing those scenes in which he so much delighted. While he amuses, he at the same time instructs his readers; and his fervent and unaffected piety, the simplicity of his taste, the benevolence of his mind, and the contentedness of his spirit, are apparent in all he thought, and in all he wrote. No lover of the rod can find himself on the banks of a river, without thinking of Walton. His name is so connected with anglers and angling, that they have become

inseparable. The charge of a want of humanity has been brought against him, and from this we would willingly rescue him. We must, however, endeavour to do it at the expence of his piscatory skill, which some of his honest disciples will, perhaps, think an act of treason.

In expressing an opinion that Walton did not deserve the name of an angler, in the modern acceptation of the word, we know that we shall excite the astonishment of many of his admirers. We must, however, honestly avow our conviction, that "our good father" was almost as ignorant of the mystery of fishing, as the contented looking cockneys that may occasionally be seen every summer dozing in a punt near Richmond Bridge. The old Cromwellian trooper, Richard Franck, was probably right when he hinted that Walton had derived his knowledge of fishing from "antiquated authors and mouldy records." We chance to have a few of these "mouldy records" in our possession, on which we set no little store, and on looking into some of them, we are bound to admit that many of the hints given by Piscator to his "honest disciple," have been taken from these rare "treatyses of fysshynge." It is evident, that his own skill in the art consisted in watching his float, as it glided gently down one of the pretty streams he has so delightfully described, while his hints and instructions to anglers were derived from those

who had preceded him in piscatory lore. Indeed Walton appears to have copied from others with but little discrimination, and an evident ignorance of the art he professes to teach. This is apparent in several of the instructions given to his disciple, Venator; and it is evident, also, that his contemporary, Richard Franck, thought that they were compiled from authorities, which were anything but authentic. The very serious charge of cruelty brought against Walton is founded on the instructions, he gives his scholar, for baiting a hook with a live frog, in which he tells him to "use him as though he loved him, that he may live the longer." In looking through some of our ancient books on the art of angling, similar instructions may be found. In one of them a recommendation is given to attach the frog by a string to the leg of "a goose's foot," in order to "see good halynge whether the gose or the pyke shall have the better." Another authority, speaking of the best bait for a pike, says "but the yellow frog, of all frogs, brings him to hand, for that's his dainty and select diet, wherein nature has placed such magical charms, that all his powers can never resist them, if fastened on the hook with that exactness, *that his life may shine*, and the bait seem undeprived of natural motion." Again, in the "Secrets of Angling," (1612), the following directions may be found for taking pike.

Now for to take this kind of fish withall,
It shall be needful to have still in store
Some living baits, as blicks, and roches small,
Gudgeon, or loch, not taken long before,
Or *yellow frogs*, that in the waters crawle,
But all alive they must be evermore.
But as for baits that dead and dull do lie,
They least esteem, and set but little by.

That Walton copied implicitly from others, without practising what he recommends, is evident, as, if he were a fisherman at all, he was what is called in modern times a ground-bait angler. Sir Henry Wotton, while he was himself employed in fly-fishing, apostrophized his companion thus:—

There stood my friend with patient skill,
Attending to his trembling quill.

Independently of this, however, we may refer to the whole tenor of Walton's life and writings as sufficient to contradict the charge of cruelty, which has been brought against him. The age in which he lived was not one of very great refinement, and the custom of fishing for pike with a live frog was probably a very prevalent one at the time he wrote his "Complete Angler." The simplicity and innocence of our "good father's" character are, however, the best proofs, which can be brought forward of the kindness of his heart, and the tenderness of his disposition.

But, as has been remarked, it would appear that the "gentle art of Angling" was only a secondary consideration with Walton, or rather a vehicle to introduce his beautiful descriptions of the country, and to prove that pure religion proceeds from a meek, cheerful, and thankful spirit. Indeed, the charm of his book consists in his taste for the innocent pleasures of rural life, and in his fervent and unaffected piety. The contemplation of the works of creation not only afforded to Walton, as it must to every good man, the certainty of a benevolent and superintending Providence, but it furnished him with an endless theme for praise and admiration.

We find such men as Dr. Johnson, Lord Hailes, Dr. Horne and others, anxious for the preservation and elucidation of Walton's "Lives," and recommending the perusal of his "Complete Angler." Sir Walter Scott called him the "good old man," and stated that "he had so true an eye for nature, so simple a taste for her most innocent pleasures, and, withal, so sound a judgment both concerning men and things, that he regretted that it had not fallen upon him to detail, in the beautiful simplicity of his Arcadian language, his observations on the scenery and manners of Scotland."

Perhaps, however, the greatest compliment paid to the biographical labours of Izaak Walton, is to be met with in the following beautiful sonnet by

Mr. Wordsworth, the celebrated poet of the Lakes, and now the poet Laureat.

There are no colours in the fairest sky
So fair as these; the feather whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these good men,
Dropped from an Angel's wing. With moistened eye
We read of faith and purest charity,
In statesman, priest, and humble citizen.
Oh! could we copy their mild virtues, then
What joy to live, what blessedness to die!
Methinks their very names shine still and bright,
Apart — like glow-worms in the woods of spring,
Or lonely tapers shooting far a light
That guides and cheers, — or seen like stars on high,
Satellites burning in a lucid ring,
Around meek WALTON's heavenly memory.

Had he been a cruel, he must necessarily have been a bad, man; but, so far from this being the case, we find writers of every class, and of every degree of fame, all joining in praise of his religious integrity and undissembled honesty of heart. In fact, he was his own biographer; and who can read his works without feeling convinced, that the tranquillity of his mind, and the simplicity of his manners, were the result of his own unblemished virtues, and the innocence of his life. We have dwelt the longer on this subject, because we were anxious to rescue the memory of the "good old Walton" from a charge, which we happen to know has occasioned some excellent persons to depreciate his character.

We have already endeavoured to point out in what the charm of Walton's writings consists. In perusing them we are led to wonder how a man, who was apprenticed to the unsentimental trade of a sempster and haberdasher, and lived in the midst of a crowded city, should have cultivated his taste for nature, and described her beauties in such truthful colours. His love of literature appears to have commenced at an early period of his life, and never to have deserted him, although he resigned all claim to "acquired learning or study." His acquaintance with the celebrated Dr. Donne, whose parishioner he was, probably had much influence on his future character, and caused his introduction to Sir Henry Wotton, Dr. Henry King, John Hales of Eton, and other eminent persons, some of whose lives he afterwards wrote. He was also known to Ben Jonson, and calls Drayton the poet, his "honest old friend." He appears, indeed, to have lived on terms of intimacy with many of the most distinguished literary men of his age, and his amiable and placid temper, his agreeable conversation and unaffected benevolence, seem to have procured for him their friendship and regard.

Walton is supposed to have sought seclusion, during the civil wars, in a cottage of his own near his native town of Stafford, and where he probably indulged in his favourite pursuit of angling. The beauteous Trent, which winds its way through

some of the finest parts of Staffordshire, its shallow waters glittering in some places over the pebbly bottom, on which I have seen cattle cooling themselves, and looking as if they were waiting for Cuyp to paint them, must have afforded him a great resource during his retirement. At this period he enjoyed the society of many learned and excellent men, and amongst others, that of Sir Henry Wotton, and their congeniality of disposition probably led them together to the river side. Staffordshire can boast of thirteen streams, and Plot has celebrated the fish to be found in several of them. On the banks of some one or other, we may fancy Walton and his friend occasionally strolling, talking over the chances of the restoration of their legitimate Monarch, and now and then plying their rods in some favourite locality. We find Sir Henry Wotton writing to the honest Angler, and telling him, that he hopes shortly to enjoy his ever-welcome company at the approaching time of the fly and the cork. He also sends him his beautiful hymn, beginning

> Oh, thou great Power! in whom I move,
> For whom I live, to whom I die, &c.

But it was on the banks of the charming Thames, where its rural beauties begin to unfold themselves, that these two friends "took sweet converse together," and either angled on those

banks from which the noble castle of Windsor is seen in such splendour, or else landed on one of the pretty aits, which are occasionally to be met with on the bosom of the river. When Sir Henry Wotton became Provost of Eton, Walton appears to have visited him frequently, and a spot is still pointed out, a short distance from the college, where they enjoyed together the diversion of the rod and line. I am indebted to a dear and affectionate daughter for the following imaginary address by the Provost to his companion, describing the spot referred to, and which cannot but be considered as a happy imitation of the style of its supposed Author.

Good Izaak, let us stay and rest us here;
Old friends when near
Should talk together oft, and not lose time
In silly rhyme,
That only addles men's good brains to write,
While those who read bless God they don't indite.

There is a tree close by the river's side;
There let's abide,
And only hear far off the world's loud din,
Where all is sin,
While we our peaceful rods shall busy ply,
Where fish spring upward to the dancing fly.

Our sports and life full oft contemned are
By men that spare
No cost of time, wealth, life, to gain their end,
And often spend

Them all in hopes some happiness to see
In what they are not, but they wish to be.

We will not search for what we may not find,
But dearly bind
Our hearts, friend Izaak, in a tighter knot;
And, this our lot,
Here long to live together in repose,
'Till death for us the peaceful scene shall close.

It is impossible to stroll along the meadows on the banks of the Thames, or to visit the classic play-fields of Eton, with Windsor Castle towering on the opposite bank, without thinking of Walton and his friend. The same river still ripples along the banks — the same noble elms grace the meadows — there is the College — the fine and interesting Chapel, and a thousand other things to remind us of the days of Sir Henry Wotton, and "our good father, Izaak Walton." There are spots, which anglers especially will delight in, and which every lover of fine and noble scenery will look at with admiration.

It is a curious fact, that Walton had attained his sixtieth year before he published his "Complete Angler," although it is written with all the freshness and vivacity of youth. Sir Harris Nicolas* has well remarked that, "whether considered as a treatise upon the Art of Angling, or

* See Mr. Pickering's beautiful edition of Walton's Angler.

as a beautiful pastoral, abounding in exquisite scenery, in sentiments of the purest morality, or in an unaffected love of the Creator and his works, it has long ranked amongst the most popular compositions in our language." It is, indeed, a delightful work, breathing the perfume of country air and of the flowers in the windows of his cottages. The reader is charmed with the varied pictures of rural scenery, and the descriptions of placid trout streams. Even the snatches of old songs have a peculiar interest, while the simplicity and kindness of heart of the author, and the manner in which the minute incidents he meets with are related, make us love as well as admire him. Even his dinners with his companions, at a village ale-house, are so well described, that we can almost fancy we see the party seated round their dish of fish, with a foaming tankard of ale by their side, and that we are listening to their harmless and amusing conversation. Walton, from the enjoyment of country air, and the prospect of country scenery, seemed to awake to a new life, which added a charm to his descriptions, from the very pleasure which they afforded him. The following beautiful passage on the song of birds, supplies a proof of this observation.

"The Lark, when she means to rejoice, and cheer herself and those that hear her, quits the

earth, and sings as she ascends higher into the air, and having ended her heavenly employment, grows then mute and sad, to think she must descend to the dull earth, which she would not touch, but for necessity. How do the Blackbird and Throssel with their melodious voices bid welcome to the cheerful spring, and in their fixed months warble forth such ditties as no art or instrument can reach to! Nay, the smaller birds, also do the like in their particular seasons, as namely, the Laverock, the Tit-lark, the little Linnet, and the honest Robin that loves mankind both alive and dead. But the Nightingale, another of my airy creatures, breathes such sweet loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, Lord, what music hast thou provided for the saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth."

I have always considered this as one of the most exquisite descriptions in Walton's Angler. No one but a true lover of nature could have written it, and the impressive beauty of the concluding passage, could only have been conceived

by a good man. How well has Mr. Moxon described him —

> WALTON! when weary of the world, I turn
> My pensive soul to thee, and soothing find
> The meekness of thy plain contented mind,
> Act like some healing charm. From thee I learn
> To sympathize with nature.
> Methinks, ev'n now
> I hear thee 'neath the milk-white scented thorn
> Communing with thy pupil, as the morn
> Her rosy cheek displays; while streams that flow,
> And all that gambol near their rippling source,
> Enchanted listen to thy sweet discourse.

The publication of his "Complete Angler," enlarged the circle of Walton's acquaintance and admirers. It is evident that men of the highest character, both for piety and learning, had a veneration and affection for him, and paid that tribute to his virtues they so well deserved. Nor has time had any diminishing influence upon this feeling. Here do we find ourselves, after a period of more than one hundred and sixty years from the appearance of his "Angler," sitting down to pay, with no small degree of affection and pleasure, our own trifling meed of applause to one whose works have afforded us not only instruction, but gratification of no ordinary kind.

Walton afforded an example, which cannot be too often inculcated and followed, that early rising,

a contented, meek, and religious disposition, and a fondness for those scenes in which nature delights in unfolding her charms, are calculated to produce a tranquil and good old age. His walks, also, over Tottenham Hill to the banks of his favourite Lea, where he tried

> The all of treachery he ever learnt,

and where he viewed the placid stream, the reflex of his own mind, and discoursed on the goodness and mercy of his Maker, praising Him, also, for "the innocent mirth and pleasure" he enjoyed, must have assisted in nurturing and maturing his soul for heaven. Happy old man! A humble disciple pays this little tribute to your memory. Often, after traversing a grassy and flowery meadow, and arriving on the banks of a pretty trout-stream, has he laid down his rod, and bidding "the busy world farewell," indulged in sweet fancies drawn from your instructive volume. There has he "contemplated the flowers that take no care, and those very many other various little living creatures that are not only created, but fed, man knows not how, by the goodness of the God of nature." There, also, has he endeavoured to be thankful for the power which protects and blesses him, for the sun which shines upon him, "and for the flowers, and showers, and food and content he enjoys, together with the leisure to go a fishing."

Walton's death took place in the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins, at Winchester, in the ninetieth year of his age. He was buried in Winchester Cathedral, in the south aisle, called Prior Silkstead's Chapel. A large black marble slab is placed over his remains, and, to use the poetical language of the amiable Mr. Bowles, "the morning sunshine falls directly on it, reminding the contemplative man of the mornings, when he was for so many years up and abroad, with his angle on the banks of his favourite stream." We went some distance out of our way, in pure love and admiration of Walton's memory, to pay a visit to his grave, and were grieved to see that the slab, which covers the remains of "our good father," was constantly trodden upon by unhallowed feet. They were not those of anglers. We left a small sum of money in the hands of the verger, with a request that he would do his best to prevent such profanation in future.

May all worthy anglers, and especially my kind friends of the Walton Club, endeavour to follow the example of the good Piscator. Whether plying their rods on the banks of a stream, or pursuing their ordinary avocations, they will find, as he did, "the sweet contentment," the calm delight, of living a virtuous and religious life.

Wak'd by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come'wing'd abroad.
From ev'ry chink
And secret corner, where they slept away
The wint'ry storms; or rising from their tombs
To higher life; by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they come.

THOMSON.

I HAVE had a part of the dead branch of an oak tree sent to me, found in Windsor Great Park, on which the Caterpillar of the puss-moth (Bombyx vinula) has constructed the outer case of its cocoon, or rather a very ingenious covering and protection to it. This case has been formed to resemble the bark of the oak so completely, that it is almost impossible to distinguish it from that substance. Indeed so complete was the deception, that had I not shook the piece of branch, and heard the rattle of the cocoon in the outer case, I should not have discovered it. It is difficult to conceive the possibility of a caterpillar producing this imitative covering, which is quite as hard as any part of the bark of an oak, and also of fixing upon it a small piece of moss to assist the deception. That the *barky* and mossy substances have been eaten off by the insect, and then reproduced in their present form, cannot admit of a doubt.

But as this case must have been made by the operation of the caterpillar from the inside of it, it is wonderful how the junction of the new with the old bark was effected, with the extreme nicety with which it is seen to be, and also how the case was up when nearly completed.

In another instance, a caterpillar of the same species of moth made its case on some old paling, and the colour of the wood was completely imitated. I consider these as amongst the most curious specimens of insect architecture, I have met with, and they afford proofs of the instinct implanted by a benevolent Creator in insignificant insects for their preservation. No wet can penetrate, and no bird could discover, or get at the imbedded cocoon. I can only regret the difficulty of giving an adequate idea of this curious structure.

I may also mention another interesting fact relating to moths. It is that they, I believe, invariably turn into cocoons on the south or warm side of trees, and never on the north sides.

It is always pleasing to watch the first emancipation of butterflies, and moths from their wintry cells on a balmy day in spring. Every thing then is so fresh, so joyous and delightful. These pretty insects settle on the newly-expanded flower, and flit about in the sunshine, or hover in the calm and tranquil evening beneath a spreading oak. It is then we may be reminded of that beautiful and

allegorical description of the Spring, in the Song of Solomon—

"Lo! the winter is past, the rain is over, and gone.

"The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

"The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

The return of Spring is always delightful, especially when the sun bursts forth after a warm refreshing shower. We then "behold God's blessings spring out of the earth," as the good and judicious Hooker remarked, when he expressed his desire to retire to the country to "study and pray."

I have been so much in the habit of looking at the works of nature with the eyes of a lover, that I frequently describe with a minuteness that may appear unnecessary, and dwell on subjects which may be thought by others unworthy of notice. Many objects have beauties which strike me, but which cursory observers would regard as trifles, or of common occurrence. The arrival of our little summer birds of passage, the streamlet overhung with willows, the rustling of a breath of air amongst the foliage of a tree, the sweet warbling of the early lark, while the dew-drops are sparkling on the greensward, the glittering flies settling on a waving rush, the silvery moon reflected on the calm water; these, and a thousand delightful scenes

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and objects, make nature so lovely, so interesting, and at the same time so various, that I ever woo her charms, and hail all her productions with joy.

When a taste is once acquired of examining the many objects which every where surround us, and solicit our attention, we have a source of interesting amusement opened to us, the tendency of which is to create in the mind a fondness for rational entertainment, and to fit it for the best impressions of kindness and a love of virtue. "Our good father Isaak Walton," said something like this with respect to honest anglers, but he and his anglers were fond of nature, and they found her by the sides of trout-streams, or beneath the shade of a graceful beech tree. Here the kind old man discoursed with his scholar on the works of the Great Creator, and the charms of the surrounding scenery, till, at the close of evening, the milk-maid sung her sprightly lay, and the little hostelry received and refreshed them. Here their weary limbs reposed in sheets perfumed with lavender, while the woodbine and jessamine clustered round their windows, and appeared to invite them, in the early dawn, to inhale their sweets when mingled with the "breath of morn." It is at such moments that the grateful offerings of the heart are most fervent, and therefore most acceptable to Him, who dwells with those of a quiet and peaceful spirit, those who look up to Him as the

Guardian of their lives, and the Creator of all around them.

My God! all nature owns Thy sway,
Thou giv'st the night, and then the day!
When all Thy lov'd creation wakes,
When morning, rich in lustre, breaks,
And bathes in dew the opening flower,
To Thee we owe her fragrant hour,
And when she pours her choral song,
Her melodies to Thee belong.

The Swallow knows her time,
And, on the vernal breezes, wings her way,
O'er mountain, plain, and far-extending seas,
From Afric's torrid sands to Britain's shore.

GRAHAME.

WHEN I was last at Paris, I saw women going about with numbers of Swallows in cages, which were occasionally purchased by persons for the pleasure of giving them freedom. I must confess that I was sorry to see these joyous birds in a state of confinement. There is so much hilarity in all their movements, their song is so sweet, and they nestle with so much confidence about our houses, that I have always regarded them with peculiar affection and pleasure. These have not been lessened by the following account, for which I am indebted to the kindness of a clergyman; many of the clergy have sent me much pleasing information. I cannot do better than copy his own words.

"Five or six years ago, three swallows fell down one of the chimnies of my house. Their naked and helpless condition having excited the pity of my family, it was determined to endeavour to rear them. I, therefore, became their foster-parent: for rainy days they were fed with egg, and in sunny weather with various species of flies. I found it,

however, a very difficult task to supply them with a sufficient number. I could only do so by sweeping the heads of umbelliferous plants with my fly-net. All the swallow tribe continue in their nests a very long time before they take their first flight; but I was anxious that my protégées should exercise their wings as soon as possible, and thus prepare themselves for emigration. I, therefore, threw them into the air as soon as I could do so prudently. At first they appeared much alarmed, and clung to the nearest object they could fasten upon; but in a few days they not only flew about, but caught their food expertly. Some time, however, elapsed before they could satisfy the cravings of appetite through their own exertions. This occasioned them frequently to appeal to me for assistance in a manner too intelligible to be mistaken. They would utter a plaintive cry in flying around me, and sometimes settle upon me. On these occasions, I usually led to those places, where the inula dysenterica (asters) abounded, from the flowers of which I easily captured various species of syrphi in the hollow of my hand. It was truly amusing to observe the eagerness with which the movement of my hand was watched, and with what voracity the produce of my efforts were devoured. As soon as my birds could fly, an open basket, having a perch across it, was set apart for their use: here they rested by day and roosted at

night. It was placed in the open air in the morning, and removed at night into the house.

"It often happened that my little charge had enjoyed two or three hours disporting before I was prepared to walk. I was, however, recognized and greeted as soon as I appeared; and whether I pursued the course of the roads, or rambled into the fields, they generally encircled me in their flight, sometimes resting upon me, or accepting a fly from my fingers. These amusive proceedings continued four or five weeks; but after that period, according to my wish, our intercourse diminished daily. They associated more and more with their congeners, who were collecting together as is usual at this period of the year, and were absent more frequently and for longer intervals; but, whenever or wherever they again appeared, they seldom failed to come to me when I summoned them by my call. Having disappeared for two or three days, I considered that our connexion was altogether dissolved; but as I was walking to an adjoining village, one of the birds gave me his wonted salutation in passing, and, on my invitation, perched on one of my fingers. In this position I conveyed it to the village green, and there, in the presence of several persons, cast it into the air, with some exclamation expressive of my wish for its welfare.

"I was often solicited to continue my interest-

ing charge throughout the winter, but I had accomplished my object. I had promoted the enjoyment of existence. That was sufficient. By attempting more, and thwarting the demands of instinct, I should probably have terminated that happiness which had been the object of my care and interest."

Should the foregoing anecdote chance to be read by any one who has thoughtlessly been in the habit of destroying these useful and interesting birds, it may, I trust, induce him to forego a practice I have never witnessed without regret.

There apears to be no portion of the known world in which they are not to be found, in certain seasons of the year, and where their indefatigable exertions keep down too great a preponderance of insects. They build in places where we should little expect to find their nests. While fishing this year in the neighbourhood of Dover, I discovered that a pair of swallows had built under an arch-way of a paper mill, through which the water rushed with great force. The space between the water and the nest could not have been more than two feet, and yet the birds fearlessly conveyed food to their young, and again came forth to seek for more, at moments when the foaming stream appeared to fill up nearly the whole of the arch-way.

It is, we presume, generally known, that the swallow tribe, which visit us in the Spring and

Summer, winter in Egypt and on the northern shores of Africa; but the fact may be new to some of our readers, that the six* species of swallows we possess, are found among many others, which though apparently equally powerful of wing, and capable of flight, do not appear to leave their native country. In the swallow tribe, the double purpose seems fulfilled, of devouring the numerous colonies of insects that breed with us in the hotter months of the year, and also of securing a proper climate and country for their own nidification; but in the case of other birds of passage, such as the Goatsucker (Caprimulgus) and the Cuckoo, though they feed also on insects, yet their numbers are so confined, as to lead us to presume that the purpose of their coming to our shores, must be altogether confined to their own preservation and increase. It is also curious, that though Bees are so numerous in England, through care and domestication, yet that the bird, the Merops apiaster, whose natural prey they are, is so seldom found here; whereas, it seems a general law of nature, that "where the carcass is, there the eagles are gathered together;" and that animals never fail to frequent those places where is the food convenient for them.

* The Swallow, three Martins and two Swifts. The Pratincole, though resembling the Swallows externally, does not belong to this family. In its habits, its skeleton, and in the character of its eggs, the Pratincole is closely allied to the Plovers.

There's not a leaf within the bower;
There's not a bird upon the tree;
There's not a dew-drop on the flower,
But bears the impress, Lord, of Thee.

MRS. OPIE.

WE are furnished with abundant proofs of a superintending Providence, and we may perceive a wise arrangement in everything connected with the animal as well as the vegetable creation. Everything has been made for some good purpose; and it is man alone who interferes with the benevolent order and design of the Creator.

A friend of mine preserved his game with more than usual strictness. His keepers had orders to destroy every stoat, weazle, hawk, owl, magpie, or jay, on his estate; and this was done to such a degree, that not one of these supposed marauders were to be met with in his preserves. The consequence was, that rats and mice infested his property to an enormous extent. The former burrowed in his fields and hedge-rows like rabbits, destroying the corn of his tenants, and feasting not only on the eggs of his partridges and pheasants, but also on the young birds when they were hatched. During the winter they committed

serious depredations in the barns and stack-yards; and although every means has been resorted to in order to destroy them, they still continue to be a great annoyance.

A similar circumstance took place in the preserves at Kew, where the *vermin* have been destroyed. The rats have become so numerous in the grounds of that place, that I have seen regular warrens of them. It is, I think, evident that had not the assigned enemies of these vermin been destroyed, they would not have increased to the extent they have done.

In places where Swallows have been wantonly driven away by shooting at them, much injury has been occasioned to hop-plants and fruit trees, by too great an increase of insects. Farmers are now beginning to discover this, and also to be aware that Rooks, so far from being injurious to them, are among their best friends. They destroy the wire-worm in great quantities, as well as the grubs of cockchafers, and those of the long-legged gnat (Tibula oleracea) and other larvæ, which are very injurious to the roots of corn. A gentleman, who farms to a considerable extent, lately informed me, that in those parts of his farm which were most frequented by pheasants, the wire-worm was not to be found, while in other places his corn was nearly destroyed by that grub. The crops of Pheasants are sometimes found completely filled

with them. Sparrows, also, although they will occasionally feed on the ripe corn in the autumn, are, during the rest of the year, most useful in destroying immense quantities of caterpillars and other insects, of which there would be too great a redundancy except for these and other birds, as green-linnets, chaffinches, titmice, &c. The Starling and Jackdaw may also be classed amongst the benefactors of the farmer. "Owls, also, should be encouraged about farm buildings, as well as Weazles: they are more efficacious than cats, in preventing too great an increase of rats and mice. Even the loathsome Toad, as it is too generally considered, has its use. A friend of mine took seventeen earwigs from the maw of one of these reptiles; and there can be no doubt but that they destroy a great number of injurious insects.

Many people are apt, on perceiving some slight present injury, to wage a sort of war against various birds and quadrupeds; forgetful and unmindful of the many advantages which it was intended they should derive from them. We may read in the book of Ecclesiasticus—

"Oh, how desirable are all His works. All these things live and remain for ever *for all* uses."

But we may pursue this subject a little further. In rivers where there has been so great a destruction of fish that few are left, insects which are bred in the water abound so much on its surface at

particular periods as almost to cover it. When pike have been allowed to increase to a great extent, the smaller fish are not only exterminated, but also the young of water-fowl, and indeed many of the old birds.

In South America, where Ants are known to exist in immense quantities, provision has been made to keep them within due bounds, and yet to make them subservient to the uses for which they were created. In order to effect this, three species of ant-Bears are found, which feed on these insects, and which are admirably furnished with the necessary means of doing so. The claws are long, strong, and curved, to enable them to scratch up the ant-hills; the tongue is long, and at the root of it, according to Mr. Waterton, there are two very large glands, from which is emitted a glutinous liquid. This liquid lubricates the tongue when it is put into the ant's nest, and they and their eggs stick to it. The ant-bear is provided with such a skin, that neither ants, however large, or even dogs, are able to make any impression on it; and its fore-feet are remarkably strong and muscular. Should a great destruction of these useful and harmless animals take place, the ants probably would become an intolerable nuisance. These animals range the forests fearlessly, as their great strength, and the peculiar toughness of their skin, with its covering, preserve

them from the attacks of tigers or the huge snakes of the country.

I have noticed this animal, as it affords so strong a proof of a wise arrangement of Providence in the economy of nature. It is much to be regretted that the cultivators of the soil do not devote some time to the study of natural history. I am not speaking now of the pleasure it might afford them, but of the real utility to be derived from it. They would learn to distinguish and protect those animals which were evidently created for beneficial purposes to the agriculturist. They would become acquainted with the many species of the vegetable kingdom; and acquire knowledge of the qualities of objects connected with their farming occupation. The study must always produce good impressions, and tend to raise the mind from nature to the wise and benevolent Creator of all things.

Indeed, my friend, I do aver
That it is not the letter R,*
But B, that is canine;
With Cowper, BEAU liv'd day and night,
And little BOUNCE was Pope's delight,
And pretty BLANCHE is mine.

J. MITFORD.

FEW facts and circumstances in natural history are more pleasing, than those which illustrate the attachment that animals shew to each other, or to those of the human race who are kind to them.

Every sportsman knows that the common Wood-pigeon (the Ring Dove) is one of the shyest birds we have, and so wild, that it is very difficult indeed to get within shot of one. This wild bird, however, has been known to lay aside its usual habits. In the spring of 1839, some village boys brought two young wood-pigeons taken from the nest to the parsonage-house of a clergyman in Gloucestershire, from whom I received the following anecdote. "They were bought from the boys merely to save their lives, and sent to an old woman near the parsonage to be bred up. She took

* *Romeo.* Ay, nurse; what of that? both with an R.
Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the dog.

great care of them, feeding them with peas, of which they are very fond. One of them died, but the other grew up, and was a fine bird. Its wings had not been cut; and as soon as it could fly, it was set at liberty. Such, however, was the effect of the kindness it had received, that it would never quite leave the place. It would fly to great distances, and even associate with others of its own kind; but it never failed to come to the house twice a day to be fed. The peas were placed for it in the kitchen window. If the window was shut, it would tap with its beak till it was opened, then come in, eat its meal, and then fly off again. If by any accident it could not then gain admittance, it would wait somewhere near, till the cook came out, when it would pitch on her shoulder, and go with her into the kitchen. What made this more extraordinary was, that the cook had not bred the bird up, and the old woman's cottage was at a little distance; but as she had no peas left, it came to the parsonage to be fed.

"This went on for some time, but the poor bird having lost its fear of man, was therefore exposed to constant danger from those who did not know it. It experienced the fate of most pets. A stranger saw it quietly sitting on a tree, and shot it, to the great regret of all its former friends."

One cold frosty spring morning, a lamb, apparently dead, was brought into the kitchen of a

gentleman in Nottinghamshire by his farming man. On being placed near the fire it revived, and eventually lived, and became so great a pet in the family, as to form quite a part of it. It had the run of the house; took its walks with any of the members of the family; and if a visit was paid, it would remain very quietly at the door till it was over. It was gentle and amiable at all times, with one exception, being of so jealous a disposition, that it could never tolerate any mark of favour shewn to a four-footed creature; an instance of which I will give in the words of my correspondent:—

"We had a remarkably ugly, half-starved, pointer dog sent to us. He had a propensity to run away, and therefore was kept tied up. He was so ill-favoured, and so awkward and disagreeable in his habits and manners, that he was universally disliked, and, I fear, neglected. There was one beloved one of our family, who was always the friend of the friendless. The same kind and generous feeling which led her, as long as she was an inhabitant of this world, to seek out misery and relieve it, prompted her to notice this forlorn, neglected animal. She would carry him food, undo his chain, and run up and down the green with him till she was tired, and would then sit down upon the grass, out of breath and weary. This was the time for the pet lamb to shew his jealousy.

He would run at them with his head, try to trample on them, and never rest till the dog was tied up again, when he appeared perfectly satisfied.

"When the lamb was grown up, circumstances obliged us to change our residence. In removing to another house, the pet was left behind, under the care of a woman who had charge of the house. On missing its old friends, it went everywhere in search of them, and stood before those doors leading to rooms in which it had been in the habit of finding us. It bleated most piteously; and at last went up stairs, and laid itself down at my bed-room door, as it had been accustomed to do before I was up in the morning. When the door was opened and it saw the empty room, it renewed its lamentations, and this it continued to do all the day. It ate nothing, and did nothing but moan and cry. Sometimes it would run about, as if a sudden thought had struck it, and a new hope had sprung up; and when it found it was a vain hope, and that it could not find us, it refused all food. Its bleatings were fainter and fainter, — it looked ill, — its eyes were dim, — and soon afterwards it died. The next morning they brought us the body of our poor Lamb."

Affection will, indeed, preponderate against the strongest impulses of nature in animals. Thus a tame Doe has been known to swim a river, in order to follow a person who has treated it with kind-

ness. And there are numerous instances, besides the one already related, of animals having refused food, and dying, when the hand which had fed and caressed them was no longer to be met with.

An Arabian horse had been sent the year before last (1841) to her Majesty, and was safely left at the royal stables, by a man who had the charge of it. On delivering up the horse, he set off for Liverpool, in order to return to his own country. From the moment, however, of his departure, the horse refused to eat, and shewed every symptom of misery. The cause of this was soon suspected, and the man was sent for from Liverpool. On arriving at the Mews, the poor animal shewed the utmost joy and affection, and soon began to feed as usual. The care and kindness of the man was thus repaid by the noble animal, with gratitude and love.

A ship recently foundered in a gale of wind, near Liverpool, and every soul perished. I have been assured, that a Newfoundland Dog was seen swimming near the place where the ship was lost, and at last came to the shore quite exhausted. He continued to do this for three days, swimming to the same spot, evidently in search of the body of his master.

The following instance of kindness and affection in a dog, recently took place in this neighbourhood of Windsor. It is so well authenticated,

and affords so strong a proof of the kindly feeling of one animal towards another, that I have much pleasure in recording it.

A schoolmaster has a small dog, which became much attached to a kitten. They were in the habit of associating together before the kitchen fire, sometimes sleeping, and sometimes playing. One day they were enjoying a comfortable nap, when the kettle boiled over and scalded the dog, who ran away howling piteously. He had not gone very far, however, before he recollected his companion; he returned immediately, took up the kitten in his mouth, and carried it to a place of safety.

Dogs soon become aware of any misfortune in the family to which they belong, and shew their sympathy in a variety of ways. Sometimes they lose their usual eagerness for food. At others they seem listless and unhappy, and their nature appears to have undergone some alteration. A female in Lincolnshire died, who had two favourite dogs. They were of the mastiff breed, occasionally very savage, and much dreaded in consequence by every one. On the death of their mistress, the wife of the clergyman of the parish went to see if she could be of any service to the other members of the family. After ringing at the bell and finding that no one answered it, she went, in great alarm for fear of the dogs, to the back door, which

she found open. Entering the kitchen, and seeing the two dogs, she was about to retire, but the animals merely raised their heads, and laid them down again, without even uttering a growl, she therefore proceeded. When the deceased was carried to the churchyard, one of the dogs followed the corpse, and neither threats nor entreaties could drive it away.

Pope tells us that the chief order of Denmark was instituted in memory of the fidelity of a dog, named Wild-brat, to one of their kings, who had been deserted by his subjects. He gave his new order this motto, — "Wild-brat was faithful." He also remarks that histories are more full of the examples of the fidelity of dogs than of friends.

A poor woman in the north of England was in the habit of going about from one village to another, selling different little things for a livelihood, and was generally accompanied by a small dog. When at home, the dog usually slept with the woman's child in a cradle, and was much attached to it. The child fell ill and died, and although the mother lived at Hawkshead, the infant was buried at Staveley. From distress of mind at the time, the poor woman took little notice of the dog, but soon after the funeral it was missed, nor could any tidings be heard of it for a fortnight. When her wanderings were resumed,

the mother happened to pass through Staveley, and with a mother's feelings went to take a mournful look at her child's grave. On going to it, she found to her great astonishment her lost dog. It was lying in a deep hole which it had scratched for itself over the child's grave, probably hoping to get a little nearer to the object of its affection. It was in an emaciated state from hunger, but neither hunger, cold or privation had expelled its love, or diminished the force of its attachment.

The following is an instance of the good sense of a dog. A gentleman whose usual place of residence is in the Island of Anglesea, came to London and brought a little terrier dog with him. It was his companion night and day through the crowded streets of the Metropolis. Upon one occasion he had some business to transact at the bank of Messrs. Drummonds, and during the time he was there, the dog lay at his feet by the side of the counter. In the course of his further walk, it was lost, but its master on returning to Messrs. Drummonds' found the dog there, on the same spot it had previously occupied, it being the only house, which its master and itself had entered together that morning.

A butcher in North Wales was drowned in endeavouring to cross a river, which had been swollen by some late rains, in consequence of his horse having plunged and thrown him. His faithful dog,

who had accompanied him all the day, followed the body as it sank, and seizing the collar of the coat with his teeth, brought the body to the side of the stream. Raising the head above the water, he held it firmly there during the whole of an inclement night. When discovered in the morning, the faithful animal was half immersed in water, and shivering with cold, but still engaged in its affectionate endeavours to save the master he loved. How deeply it is to be regretted, that such noble and faithful creatures should be ever ill-used.

The following is another pleasing instance of the sense and fidelity of a dog. An officer having dined out, was returning to his barracks rather late in the evening, and rested himself on a large stone near the sea shore, where he shortly fell asleep. He was attended very fortunately by a small dog. The tide came in rapidly while he was in this situation, and the little animal appears to have been sensible of his master's danger. He set off to the mess-room of the regiment, which was about a mile distant. On arriving at it, he exhibited the greatest signs of eagerness and distress, and pulled several of the officers by their clothes. This behaviour of the dog caused two or three of them to get up, upon which the animal appeared quite delighted, and kept running before them, turning every now and then to see if they followed him. Their curiosity being raised, they

allowed the faithful creature to lead them to the spot where the officer was still fast asleep, the tide having just reached his feet. Had they not arrived at the moment they did, their companion must inevitably have been drowned.

Another interesting anecdote of the sense and affection of a dog is mentioned by Mr. Backhouse, in his visit to the Australian Colonies. The eldest son of a settler, near Maitland, when between two and three years old, wandered into the bush and was lost. The boy would probably have perished, but for a faithful spaniel that followed him. At midnight the dog came and scratched at the door of one of the servant's huts, and when it was opened, ran towards the place where the child was. A man followed the dog, which led him to a considerable distance through a thick brush by the side of the river, where he found the little boy, seated on the ground, but almost stiff from cold. The dog afterwards lost its life from the bite of a snake, much to the sorrow of its little master, who pointed out to Mr. Backhouse, with evident emotion, the corner of the room where it had died.

A waggoner, attended by his faithful dog, while driving his team, attempted to get upon one of the shafts of the waggon, but fell, and the wheels went over his head and killed him. The dog swam across a river, as the quickest way of

getting to the farm, where he used almost human means to prevail upon the fellow workmen to go with him to render assistance to his unfortunate master.

These anecdotes may serve to prove, not only the sense and attachment of dogs, but that when they have been educated by man and become his companion, they may almost be considered as rational animals. I was interested the other day in watching a flock of sheep, attended by a drover and his dog, as they were passing along a turnpike road. The man went into an ale-house by the road side, leaving his dog to look after the sheep. They spread themselves over the road and foot-path, some lying down and others feeding, while the dog, faithful to his trust, watched them carefully. When any carriage passed along the road, or a person was seen on the foot-path, the dog, gently drove the sheep on one side to make a passage, and then resumed his station near the ale-house door. Those, indeed, who have travelled much at the time of the great fair of Weyhill, must have observed the sagacity of the drovers' dogs on the approach of a carriage. A passage is made for it through the most numerous flocks of sheep, in the readiest and most expert manner, without any signal from the drover. The fatigue that these dogs must undergo is very great, and yet one sees them sidle up to their

master after each exertion, and look at him, as if asking for his approbation of what they had done.

That dogs are able to discover likenesses in pictures is undoubted, and I have in another work given one or two well-authenticated instances of this fact. This circumstance alone would prove their intellectual faculties, as I suppose that no other animal whatever would be able to identify either the human face, or one of their own species on canvas however well painted. The following anecdote may serve to corroborate the above remark.

Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, calling one day on Sir Godfrey Kneller at his country seat near Hounslow, was taken into his summer-house, where there was a whole length picture of Lady Kneller. It was much damaged and scratched at the feet, and the Bishop expressed a curiosity to know how it became so injured. Sir Godfrey said, it was owing to a favourite dog of Lady Kneller's, who, having been accustomed to lie in her lap, scratched the picture in that manner in order to be taken up. This made the Bishop mention, that Zeuxis painted a bunch of grapes upon a boy's head so naturally, that a bird pecked at them. "If the boy," said Sir Godfrey, "had been painted as naturally as the grapes, the bird would not have ventured to come near them."

Perhaps some one of my readers may be able to inform me what has become of Lady Kneller's picture. The anecdote must add to its interest.

The sense of dogs is sometimes developed at an early age. A neighbour of mine had a spaniel puppy, about six months old, which two ladies of his acquaintance undertook the care of. The dog had his food given him in a cup, which was always kept in the corner of the room for that purpose, and was fed while the worthy ladies were having their breakfast and tea. One day they forgot the dog, being engaged in conversation, but to their surprise they saw him standing by the side of the table with the cup held in his mouth, evidently for the purpose of having something put into it. This he now continues to do regularly at every meal, and it is evident that there is a connection of ideas between his wants and the means of having them supplied. It is impossible, in this instance, not to give the little animal credit for reflection, if not for some approach to reason.

The following anecdote, which is perfectly well known in the town in which the circumstance occurred, places the intelligence, kind feeling, and noble disposition of a dog in a strong light, and quite equal to what has been recorded of the elephant under nearly similar circumstances. A grocer in Worcester had a powerful Newfoundland dog, which was reposing on the step of his door,

when a sort of brewer's sledge was going rapidly down the hill leading to the bridge. Just as the sledge was passing the house, a little boy in crossing the street, fell down in the way of the sledge, and would have been killed, had not the dog seen the danger, and rushing forward, seized the boy in his mouth just in time to save his life, and deposited him on the foot-way uninjured.

Nor are cats without strong feelings of affection. An old lady had a favourite cat which was much petted by her. One day a young friend was staying with her, and while sitting at the window of the drawing room, she began playfully to pat the old lady. The cat seeing what was going on, and probably supposing that her mistress was being ill-treated, crouched down with glaring eyes and swelling tail, and was evidently preparing to fly at the young lady, when fortunately her mistress saw the cat just in time to prevent the assault, and it was with some difficulty driven from the room.

Instances of the local memory and attachment of dogs to places, where they have lived, are not uncommon, but the cat is generally supposed to be an animal of an inferior developement of instinct and feelings; we, however, can mention a very singular example both of its fondness for the house where it was bred, and of means, apparently beyond its power, which it took when removed

to a distance, to regain it. A medical gentleman residing at Saxmundham in Suffolk, dined with a friend in the village of Grundisburgh, about twelve miles distant. Late in the evening he returned home; a young cat had been given to him by his host, which was placed in a basket, and deposited in the boot of the phaeton. This shy, timid, little animal, for such is the cat, and one quite unused to leave the precincts of its former habitation, three days subsequent to the journey, was found, wet, tired, and covered with dirt, at the door of its former master's house at Grundisburgh; having by some instinctive power, unaccountable to us, found its way from one place to another; assuredly not being guided by the sense of vision, or the recollection of places, for the former journey had been performed in confinement and utter darkness.

Thou hast sail'd far—
Permit me of these unknown lands t'inquire
Lands never till'd, where thou hast wondering been,
And all the marvels thou hast heard and seen.

CRABBE.

IT is pleasing to see the attention of our naval officers directed to subjects of Natural History, and to find that some of the observations they have made have been turned to useful purposes. Captain Fitzroy, in his very interesting narrative of his Surveying Voyage in the Beagle, a work which shews the zeal, good sense, and kind feeling of that indefatigable officer, tells us that he profited much by observing the flight of birds when out of sight of land. He thinks that land, especially small islands or reefs, may be discovered in consequence of watching the particular kinds of birds, and noticing the direction in which they fly in the evening, about sunset. Thus, after a severe gale of wind, he was in doubt whether those remote islands, called the Keelings, were to the east or west. He was inclined to steer eastward, when a number of Gannets flew past the ship towards the west. He immediately steered after them, and early next morning saw

the Keelings right a head. He says, that generally speaking, if there is land within fifty miles of a vessel, its existence will be indicated, and the direction in which to look for it will be pointed out by birds. He observed some Tern, however, about 120 miles from any known land, and this fact may help to shew within what limits the appearance of those birds may be considered to indicate the vicinity of land.

The length and strength of the wings of those birds which take long and frequent flights over the vast ocean, their peculiar formation and adaptation to the climates and places they frequent, are subjects which must always interest not only a naturalist, but the Christian, who delights in beholding and enquiring into the ways of Providence, as evidenced in the works of creation. It is one of those subjects which the human mind is, I think, called upon to investigate. It affords us the clearest view of a protecting Power, and of a wonderful arrangement in the organization of every thing, sufficient to stifle the doubts of a sceptic, and to fill the mind of a sincere believer with wonder and admiration. If the inferior works of creation are so constantly under the care and guidance of a superintending Providence, how delightfully and confidently may the humble Christian, amidst the storms, and cares and anxieties of this life, look up to the same

benevolent hand for support, comfort and assistance.

I was led into these reflections, by the perusal of the following passage in Captain Fitzroy's narrative, already referred to: and it contains an interesting illustration of what has been said. Speaking of the Galapagos Islands, all of which are of volcanic origin, and the lava, of which they are chiefly composed, excessively hard, he informs us, that all the small birds found upon them have short beaks, very thick at the base, like those of a bullfinch. This appears, he adds, to be one of those admirable provisions of Infinite Wisdom, by which each created thing is adapted to the place for which it was intended. In picking up insects, or seeds, which lie on hard iron-like lava, the superiority of such beaks over delicate ones, cannot be doubted; but there is, perhaps, a further object in their being so strong and wide. Collnett, in his voyage to the South Seas, says, page 59, that "they observed an old bird in the act of supplying three young ones with drink, by squeezing the berry of a tree into their mouths. It was about the size of a pea, and contained a watery juice, of an acid, but not an unpleasant taste. The leaves of these trees absorb the copious dews which fall during the night; the birds then pierce them with their bills for the moisture they retain, and which, I believe, they also procure from the various plants

and evergreens. The torch thistle contains a liquid in its heart, which the birds drank, when it was cut down. They sometimes even extracted it from the young trees, by piercing the trunks with their bills." It is evident that what are called soft-billed birds would be unable to squeeze berries, and pierce woody fibres, or even leaves only; so that the peculiar formation of those referred to, is one of those interesting facts which serves to prove the directing hand of an all-wise Creator.

The public are greatly indebted to Mr. Gould, for his recent researches in natural history on the Australian continent. The introduction he has made of so many new birds and quadrupeds into this country, and his observations on their peculiar habits and localities, must afford new pleasure to every lover of nature. In the first part of his splendid work on the birds of Australia, in speaking of the Sacred Kingfisher (Halcyon sanctus) he informs us, that so far from its habits being similar to our own glittering bird of that species, it is frequently found in the most arid and dry situations, far distant from water. It appears that a supply of this element is not essential to its existence; and this is the case with many of the insectivorous birds of Australia. From the localities, in which this kingfisher is found breeding, it must pass long periods without being able to obtain any

water for itself or its young. Unlike our own kingfisher, which seems to delight in moisture, it never plunges into the water, but it feeds on lizards, grashoppers and caterpillars, and very small snakes; the latter being killed by beating their heads against a stone or other hard substance. They are all swallowed whole, and the moisture of their bodies must supply the want of water. This is another instance of the adaptation of a creature to the peculiar situation in which it is found.

Mr. Gould, also, mentions some curious facts relating to the habits of the Wattled Talegalla (Talegalla Lathami), and which forms one of the numerous anomalies of Australia. This bird seems to be allied to the gallinaceæ, the head having much of the appearance of that of the turkey, and the body is shaped like those of our domestic fowls. Its bright yellow wattles, and red neck, give it a peculiar appearance. The feet are large and strong, and of a disproportionate size, and the claws are slightly curved. We shall presently see the uses for which they were designed.

It is a remarkable fact, that this bird does not hatch its eggs by incubation. In order to effect this object, it assimilates in some degree to the practice of the ostrich, yet upon a totally different principle. The talegalla collects together an immense heap of decaying vegetable matter, as a depository for the eggs, and trusts to the heat en-

gendered by the process of decomposition for the hatching them.* Mr. Gould says, that the heap employed for this purpose, is collected by the birds during several weeks previously to the period of laying; that it varies in size from two to four cart-loads, and is of a perfectly pyramidal form. The construction of the mound is not the work of one pair of birds, but is effected by the united labours of several; the same site appears, from the great size and the entire decomposition of the lower part, to be resorted to for several years in succession; the birds adding a fresh supply of materials on each occasion, previously to laying their eggs.

The mode in which the materials composing these mounds are accumulated is singular, and proves the utility of their large and strong feet and claws. The bird never uses the bill in collecting materials for the nest, but always grasps a quantity in its foot, throwing it backwards to one common centre, and thus clearing the surface of the ground for a considerable distance so completely, that scarcely a leaf or a blade of grass is left. The heap being accumulated, and time allowed for a

* It is now supposed, according to Mr. Backhouse, that both the male and female birds watch the heaps during the period of the eggs being hatched; and that the latter diminishes or adds to the heated vegetable matter, according to the instinct given to her by her Creator.

sufficient heat to be engendered, the eggs are deposited, not side by side, as is ordinarily the case, but planted at the distance of nine or twelve inches from each other, and buried at nearly an arm's depth perfectly upright, with the large end upwards; they are covered over as they are laid, and allowed to remain until hatched. Mr. Gould was informed both by natives, and settlers living near their haunts, that it is not an unusual event to obtain nearly a bushel of eggs at one time from a single heap. This fact would, perhaps, serve to prove that more than one female deposits her eggs in the same mound, as is the case with the Guinea fowl, and the circumstance of the mound being formed by several birds would corroborate this supposition. Some of the natives state, that the females are constantly in the neighbourhood of the heap about the time the young are likely to be hatched, and frequently uncover and cover them up again, apparently for the purpose of assisting those that may have appeared, while others state that the eggs are merely deposited, and the young allowed to force their way unassisted. The upright position of the eggs tends to strengthen the opinion, that they are never disturbed after being deposited, as it is well known that the eggs of birds which are placed horizontally, are frequently turned during incubation. There seems to be little doubt but that this very interesting bird

might be domesticated. Its eggs are said to be delicious eating, and they are much sought after. Mr. Gould adds that they are in the habit of resorting to the branches of trees, as a shelter from the mid-day sun, at which time they will allow a succession of shots to be fired at them, until they are all brought down. Unless some measure, therefore, is adopted for their preservation, this circumstance must lead to an early extinction of the race.

The habits also of the Ocellated Leipoa (Leipoa ocellata) are equally curious. It is found in the little-explored regions of Australia, and its favourite country appears to be the barren sandy plains of the interior. It is a ground bird, never taking to a tree except when closely hunted. In examining its habits, it is most curious to observe how beautifully the means, employed by nature for the reproduction of the species, are adapted to the situations it is destined to inhabit. In its actions and manner it is very like the domestic fowl, and about the same size. It deposits its eggs in a mound of sand, the formation of which is the work of both sexes. They scratch up the sand for many yards around, forming a mound of about three feet in height; the inside being constructed of alternate layers of dried leaves, grasses, &c., amongst which the eggs are deposited to the number of twelve or upwards,

and covered up by the birds as they lay them. The bird never sits upon the eggs, but when she has laid her number, the whole are covered up, after which the mound of sand resembles an ant's nest. The eggs are hatched by the heat of the sun's rays, the vegetable lining of the hillock retaining sufficient warmth during the night. The eggs are deposited in layers; no two eggs being suffered to lie without a division. In opening the mounds, ants are found almost as numerous as in an ant-hill. These insects may not improbably add to the warmth, but serve as a ready supply of food for the young birds when they get from their place of confinement. It is not a little extraordinary that they should be able to accomplish this, as in many instances it was found that the part of the mound, surrounding the lower portion of the eggs, had become so hard, that it was necessary to chip round them with a chisel in order to get them out. The insides of the mound are always hot. These nests are always found where the soil is dry and sandy, and so thickly wooded with a species of dwarf plant, (Leptospermum) that in straying from the native paths, it is almost impossible to force a way through. In these close scrubby woods, small open glades occasionally occur, and here the bird constructs its nest, which is sometimes nine feet in diameter.

I am indebted to Mr. Gould for a description of the two birds abovementioned, but he has introduced a third of the same family still more interesting, called the "Mound raising Megapode." (Megapodius tumulus). The account is taken from Mr. Gilbert's notes, which were communicated to Mr. Gould.

On Mr. Gilbert's arriving at Port Essington, his attention was attracted to numerous immense mounds of earth, which the natives informed him were made by the Jungle-fowl for the purpose of hatching its eggs. Aware that the eggs of the Leipoa were hatched in a similar manner, he determined to ascertain all he possibly could on the subject, and having procured the assistance of a very intelligent native, who was acquainted with the places resorted to by the Jungle-fowl, he proceeded to Knocker's Bay, where he was informed a number of these birds was always to be seen. On landing beside a thicket, he had not proceeded far from the shore, before a mound of sand and shells, with a slight mixture of black soil, was seen. The base rested on a sandy beach, only a few feet above high water-mark. It was enveloped in the large yellow-blossomed hibiscus, was of a conical form, twenty feet in circumference at the base, and about five feet in height. On asking the native what it was, he replied it was the jungle-fowl's house or nest. On scrambling up the sides of it,

a young bird was found in a hole about two feet deep. It was lying on a few dry withered leaves, and appeared to be only a few days old. So far Mr. Gilbert was satisfied, that these mounds had some connection with the bird's mode of incubation, but he was still sceptical as to the probability of these young birds ascending from so great a depth as the natives represented, and his suspicions were confirmed by his being unable to induce the native, in this instance, to search for the eggs, his excuse being that "he knew it would be of no use, as he saw no traces of the old birds having recently been there." He took the greatest care of the young bird, intending to rear it if possible. It was placed in a box, having a large portion of sand in it. It fed rather freely on bruised Indian corn, but proved of so wild and intractable a disposition, that it would not reconcile itself to such close confinement, and effected its escape the third day. During the period it remained in captivity, it was incessantly occupied in scratching up the sand into heaps, and the rapidity, with which it threw the sand from one end of the box to the other, was quite surprising for so young and small a bird, its size not being larger than that of a small quail. At night it was so restless, that he was constantly kept awake by the noise it made in its endeavours to escape. In scratching up the sand it only used

one foot, and having grasped a handful as it were, the sand was thrown behind it, with but little apparent exertion, and without shifting its standing position on the other leg. This habit seemed to be the result of an innate restless disposition, and a desire to use its powerful feet, and to have but little connexion with its feeding; for while thus employed, it was never seen picking up any of the corn which was mixed with the sand.

On his next visit to Knocker's Bay, Mr. Gilbert had the gratification of seeing two eggs taken from one of the mounds at a depth of six feet, it being one of the largest he had seen. In this instance, the holes ran down in an oblique direction from the centre towards the outer slope of the hillock; so that, although the eggs were six feet deep from the summit, they were only two or three feet from the side. The birds are said to lay only one egg in each hole, and after the egg is deposited, the earth is immediately thrown down lightly until the hole is filled up; the upper part of the mound is then smoothed and rounded over. It is easily known, when a Jungle-fowl has been recently excavating, from the distinct impressions of its feet on the top and sides of the mound, and the earth being so lightly thrown over, that with a slender stick the direction of the hole is readily detected: the ease, or difficulty of thrusting the stick down, indicating the length of time that may have elapsed

since the bird's operations. Thus far it is easy enough; but to reach the eggs requires no little exertion and perseverance. The natives dig them up with their hands alone, and only make sufficient room to admit their bodies, and to throw out the earth between their legs; by grubbing with their fingers alone, they are enabled to follow the direction of the hole with greater certainty. This will, sometimes, at a depth of several feet, turn off abruptly at right angles; its direct course being obstructed by a clump of wood or some other impediment. Their patience, however, is often put to severe trials. In the present instance, the native dug down six times, in succession, to a depth of at least six or seven feet without finding an egg, and at the last attempt came up in such a state of exhaustion that he refused to proceed. Mr. Gilbert was too much excited to relinquish this opportunity of verifying the statements of the natives. He, therefore, by the offer of an additional reward, induced him to try again. The seventh trial proved successful, when the native, with equal pride and satisfaction, held up an egg, and, after two or three more attempts, produced a second; thus proving, how cautious Europeans should be in disregarding the narratives of these poor children of nature, because they appear extraordinary, or different from anything with which they were previously acquainted.

Mr. Gilbert revisited Knocker's Bay in February, and having, with some difficulty, penetrated into a dense thicket of cane-like creeping plants, he suddenly found himself beside a mound of gigantic proportions. It was fifteen feet in height, and sixty in circumference at the base, the upper part being about a third less, and was entirely composed of the richest description of light vegetable mould; on the top were very recent marks of the bird's feet. Assisted by a native, he immediately set to work, and after an hour's extreme labour, rendered the more fatiguing from the excessive heat, and the tormenting attacks of myriads of mosquitoes and sand-flies, he succeeded in obtaining an egg from a depth of about five feet. It was in a perpendicular position, with the earth surrounding, and very lightly touching it on all sides, and without any other material to impart warmth, which in fact did not appear necessary, the mound being quite warm to the hands. The holes in this mound commenced at the outer end of the summit, and ran down obliquely towards the centre: their direction, therefore, is not uniform. Like the majority of other mounds, this was so enveloped in thickly-foliaged trees, as to preclude the possibility of the sun's rays penetrating to any part of it.

The mounds differ very much in their composition, form, and situation; most of those that are

placed near the water's edge were formed of sand and shells, without a vestige of any other material, but some of them had a portion of soil and decaying wood. When constructed of this loose material, they are very irregular in outline, and often resemble a bank thrown up by a constant heavy surf. One remarkable specimen of this description, situated on the southern side of Knocker's Bay, has the appearance of a bank from twenty-five to thirty feet in length, with an average height of five feet. Another, even more singular, is situated at the head of the harbour, and is composed entirely of pebbly iron-stone, resembling a confused heap of sifted gravel. This was dug into, to the depth of two or three feet, without any change of character being found. It might have been conical originally, but was now without any regularity, and very extensive, covering a space of at least 150 feet in circumference. These remarkable specimens would, however, seem to be exceptions, as by far the greater number are entirely formed of light black vegetable soil, are of a conical form, and are situated in the densest thickets. Occasionally the mounds are met with in barren, rocky, and sandy situations, where not a particle of soil similar to that of which they are composed occurs for miles around. How the soil is produced in such situations is not a little wonderful, and almost unaccountable. It is said, that the

parent birds bring it from a great distance; but as we have seen that they readily adapt themselves to the difference of situation, this is scarcely probable. It is, therefore, likely, that they collect dead leaves and other vegetable matter, and which when decomposed, forms this particular description of soil. These mounds are doubtless the work of many years, and of many birds in succession, some of them being evidently very ancient, trees being often seen growing from their sides. The natives do not agree as to the way in which the young make their escape; some asserting that they find their way unaided, and others, that the old birds, knowing when the young are ready to emerge from their confinement, scratch down and release them.

The natives also assert, that only a single pair of birds are ever found at one mound at a time; and such, from observations Mr. Gilbert made, is probably the case. They also affirm, that the eggs are deposited at night, at intervals of several days; a statement which appears to be correct, as four eggs taken on the same day, and from the same mound, contained young in different stages of developement. The fact, that they are always placed perpendicularly, is established by the concurrent testimony of different tribes of natives.

The jungle-fowl is almost exclusively confined to the dense thickets immediately adjacent to the

sea-beach. It appears never to go far inland, except along the banks of creeks. It is either met with in pairs, or quite solitary, and feeds on the ground; its food consisting of roots, which its powerful claws enable it to scratch up with the greatest facility, and also of seeds, berries, and insects.

These birds lay their eggs from the latter part of August till March. Their flight is heavy; and on alighting on a tree, they stretch out their heads and necks in a straight line with their bodies, remaining in this position as stationary and motionless as the branch upon which they are perched. Their note or cry is said to resemble the clucking of the domestic fowl, ending with a scream, like that of the peacock. Their habits are particularly shy and retired.

It is impossible that the accounts of these birds should fail to interest every lover of nature. Mr. Gould, from whom I have received them, and whose kindness and assistance I now beg gratefully to acknowledge, has shewn so much ardour and enterprize in his researches, accompanied by so much good sense and discrimination in his varied pursuits, that he must always rank among the first of English naturalists.

Curious and interesting as the account of the Mound-birds may be, we are still further indebted to Mr. Gould, for his having been the first to place upon record, a still more extraordinary ac-

count of the Bower-Birds of Australia. I will begin with the Satin Bower-Bird (Ptilonorhynchus holosericeus.)

The principal feature in the habits of this bird, is the fact (and it is one of no ordinary interest, both to the naturalist and the general admirer of nature,) of its forming a bower-like structure for the purpose of a play-ground or hall of assembly; a circumstance in its economy, which adds another to the many anomalies, if not incongruities, of the fauna of Australia.

These bowers are usually placed under the shelter of the branches of some overhanging tree, in the most retired part of a forest. They differ considerably in size, some being much larger than others. The base consists of an extensive and rather convex platform of sticks firmly interwoven, on the centre of which the bower itself is built. This, like the platform on which it is placed, and with which it is interwoven, is formed of sticks and twigs, but of a more slender and flexible description, the tips of the twigs being so arranged as to curve inwards, and nearly meet at the top. In the interior of the bower, the materials are so placed that the forks of the twigs are always presented outwards, by which arrangement not the slightest obstruction is offered to the passage of the birds. The interest of this curious bower is much enhanced by the manner in which it is de-

SATIN BOWER BIRDS,

With their Decorated Playing Ground.

corated, at and near the entrance, with the most gaily-coloured articles that can be collected, such as the blue tail-feathers of the Rose-hill and Pennantian parrots, bleached bones, the shells of snails, &c., some of the feathers are stuck in amongst the twigs, while others, with the bones and shells are strewed about near the entrances. The propensity of these birds to pick up and fly off with any attractive object is so well known to the natives, that they always search the runs for any small missing article, as the bowl of a pipe, &c. that may have been accidentally dropped in the brush. Mr. Gould found, at the entrance of one of them, a small neatly-worked stone tomahawk, together with slips of blue cotton rags, which the birds had doubtless picked up at a deserted encampment of the natives.

For what purpose these curious bowers are made is not yet, perhaps, fully ascertained. They are certainly not used as a nest, but as a place of resort for many individuals of both sexes; which, when there assembled, run through and around the bower in a sportive and playful manner, and that so frequently, that it is seldom entirely deserted.

The proceedings of these birds have not been sufficiently watched, to render it certain whether the runs are frequented throughout the whole year or not. It is, however, highly probable that they are merely resorted to as a rendezvous or

play-ground at the pairing time and during the period of incubation. It was at this season Mr. Gould visited these localities, when he found that the bowers had been recently renewed. It was evident, from the appearance of a portion of the accumulated mass of sticks, &c. that the same spot had been used as a place of resort for many years. A gentleman informed Mr. Gould, that after having destroyed one of these bowers, and secreted himself, he had the satisfaction of seeing it partially reconstructed. The birds engaged in this task were females. Mr. Gould, with much care and trouble, succeeded in bringing two fine specimens of these bowers to England, one of which he presented to the British Museum, and the other to the collection of Natural History at Leyden.

The Spotted Bower-bird (Chlamydera maculata) is peculiarly interesting, as being the constructor of a bower, even more extraordinary than the one just noticed, and in which the decorative propensity is carried to a far greater extent. It is as exclusively an inhabitant of the interior of the country, as the satin bower-bird is of the brushes between the mountain range and the coast. It has a disposition of extreme shyness, and therefore is seldom seen by ordinary travellers. Mr. Gould found that the readiest way of obtaining specimens was by watching at the water-holes, where they

SPOTTED BOWER BIRDS,

With their Decorated Playing Ground.

come to drink. On one occasion, near the termination of a long drought, he was guided by a native to a deep basin in a rock, which still held water from the rains of many months before, and where numbers of the birds, as well as honeysuckers and parrots, were constantly assembling throughout the day. This natural reservoir had probably been but seldom, if ever, visited by a white man, as it was situated in a remote mountain, and presented no attraction to any person but a naturalist. His presence was evidently regarded with suspicion by the visitants to the spot; but while he remained lying on the ground perfectly motionless, though close to the water, their thirst overpowered their fear, and they would dash down, and eagerly take their fill, although an enormous black snake was lying coiled upon a piece of wood near the edge of the pool. The spotted bower-birds were by far the shyest of the whole.

In many of its actions, and in the greater part of its economy, much similarity exists between this species and the satin bower-bird; particularly in the curious habit of constructing an artificial bower or play-ground. The situations of these runs or bowers are much varied. They were found both on the plains studded with the acacia pendula and other small trees, and in the brushes clothing the lower hills. They are considerably longer and more avenue-like than those of the satin

bower-bird. They are outwardly built of twigs, and beautifully lined with tall grasses, so disposed that their heads nearly meet. The decorations are very profuse; and consist of bivalve shells, crania of small mammalia, and other bones. Evident and beautiful indications of design are manifest throughout the whole of the bower, and its decorations, formed by this species; particularly in the manner in which the stones are placed within the bower, apparently to keep the grasses, with which it is lined, firmly fixed in their places. These stones diverge from the mouth of the run on each side, so as to form little paths, while the immense collection of decorative materials are placed in a heap before the entrance of the avenue; this arrangement being the same at both ends. In some instances, small bowers, composed almost entirely of grasses, apparently the commencement of a new place of rendezvous, were observable. These structures were at a considerable distance from rivers, from the borders of which the birds could alone have procured the shells and small round pebbly stones. Their collection and transportation must, therefore, have been a task of great labour and difficulty. As these birds feed almost entirely upon seeds and fruit, the shells and bones cannot have been collected for any other purpose than ornament; besides, it is only those that have been bleached perfectly white by the sun, or such

as have been roasted by the natives, and by this means whitened, that attract their attention. Mr. Gould clearly ascertained that these runs formed the rendezvous of many individuals.

Such is the account he has given of the habits of these extraordinary birds, which cannot fail of interesting the naturalist. I have now only to offer my thanks for the permission, so kindly given me by Mr. Gould, to make use of his splendid work, and to extract what portion I pleased of it.

We can only perceive the language of beasts by attending to the particular cries they make, and to the influence which these cries have upon the feeling and actions of their associates. Brutes by uttering certain sounds, are enabled to communicate their feelings to every individual of the same species.

SMELLIE.

THE language, or the peculiar sounds made by beasts, birds and even insects, expressive of their wants, fears, anger or desires, are very distinct from each other, and to those who have paid attention to them, are very interesting. A common cock and the pheasant have notes of exultation or defiance—others of fear or warning, and a third of complacency or gallantry, when the hens are called to partake of food. The swallow utters its note of love in the pairing season — screams at seeing an enemy, and greets its young with a tone of affection extremely pleasing. The goose hisses when angry, cackles when happy and has a note of alarm. The duck also expresses its different feelings, by sounds. These may all be called domestic birds. Others which conceal their nests carefully, feed their young not only silently, but with considerable stealth, fearful that their retreat should be discovered and invaded. When, however, the

young have left their nest and can fly from danger, the food is brought to them, and received with notes of pleasure and gratification. I have often watched young fly-catchers, soon after they have quitted their nest, perched on the top of a gate, or on the dead branch of a tree, attended by the parent birds, who merrily dart after flies and small moths, and feed their brood with them. These receive it with all the little blandishments of love, quivering their wings, and exhibiting evident marks of satisfaction. The old birds utter "an inward wailing note," as Mr. White calls it, when their young are in danger.

The blackbird* screams when alarmed, sings when pleased, and has a peculiar note when suddenly surprised. A gentleman at Grantham has a Blackbird which frequents his orchard, and which crows and chuckles as fowls do. It was bred in a nest in a bush close to his hen-house. Starlings which are restless, sociable birds, have notes which resemble those of song birds, but they are difficult to hear. They are low and plaintive.

* A Goldfinch was lately (October, 1843,) brought to a bird-stuffer at Margate, which had been for the long period of eighteen years in its cage, and its plumage shewed, except in the wing feathers, few marks of age. I had also the opportunity lately of ascertaining the longevity of a blackbird. The Lodge Keeper of the Queen Dowager's Lodge in Bushy Park had one of these birds in a cage during a period of seventeen years. When I saw it, it was nearly blind, and had every appearance of old age.

At other times they utter a note like a sudden snap, and when they congregate in the evening they chatter with satisfaction, or sometimes use an elongated note, especially in the breeding season. I have been assured that so thickly do these birds assemble at their roosting places in some localities, that more than a thousand have been killed by firing shots into the bushes, or low trees, on one night only.

But the most extraordinary bird I ever met with was my favourite Magpie. He expressed his anger, wants, pleasure and gratitude in the most marked and distinct manner. When he saw one or two favourites, he would make a noise resembling a kiss, and shew his delight in a way not to be misunderstood. When angry he was vociferous, and scolded at the sight of any one he disliked. His laugh was so hearty, joyous and natural, that no one who heard it could help joining in it, and he talked quite as distinctly as any human being. Poor bird! like most favourites, he came to an untimely end, and we missed him as we should have done one of the inmates of the family.

The call of the Partridge when separated from its associates is very peculiar, but when the retreat of its young is invaded, its cries are piercing or rather a sort of scream. When they have been scattered by a sportsman,

The mother's call
Is heard repeated oft, a plaintive note!
Mournful she gathers in her brood, dispersed
By savage sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings.

But the language of the Dog is, perhaps, the most expressive of any animal, and to this he adds the language of the eyes. Much of this is acquired, no doubt, by associating with man, from whom he learns to obey signals, and certain words of command. He modulates his tones according to circumstances, whether of anger, pleasure, grief, or warning, howls on hearing discordant sounds, whines for admission when shut out of a room or house, and looks with the fondest love and affection at his master. He shews his gratitude in a way not to be mistaken, and nothing can shake his fidelity and attachment. A kennel might have been seen at Brussels, placed in a particular situation, for a dog which could never be induced to quit the spot, where his master had been murdered. There are also instances on record of dogs frequenting the doors of prisons, to which their masters had been committed, and waiting patiently from day to day in expectation of their release.

The Cat has several different and significant tones, most of them harsh and unpleasing. It shews attachment by purring and gentle mewings,

and its fondness for those who have been kind to it is sometimes very great. A cat is said to have descended a chimney in order to get at her imprisoned master.

Elephants, horses, cows, pigs, and indeed almost all quadrupeds have different tones in which they express their several wants and feelings. It would be endless to particularize the whole of them, but I may mention the sheep. It has been asserted that in a large flock of these animals, the tones of each are so distinct, that the lambs readily recognize the voice of their respective mothers. When they have been separated, even for a short time only, they evince the greatest joy at meeting again.

In immense forests where animals of different sexes separate, or are few in number, and where their calls would not be heard, an extraordinary facility has been afforded them of finding each other. This many of them do, as the pine-martin, civet, skunk, and other musky animals, by rubbing themselves against trees, thus leaving a scent, by which they are traced by their congeners to great distances, and through almost interminable forests. Except for this provision of nature, it is evident that many animals would have great difficulty in tracing each other, and thus the *notus odor* of each species serves instead of language, or the usual calls. A curious instance

of this lately occurred in the Zoological gardens in the Regent's Park.

The Earl of Derby had presented the Society with a Buffalo, which arrived at the Gardens in the evening in a covered van. When the van was at a considerable distance from a yard, in which another buffalo was confined, they both evinced much restlessness, so that it was evident to the different attendants, that they were aware of the propinquity of each other. The buffalo in the gardens was so eager to get out of his enclosure, that it was thought prudent to tie the gate more securely, and this was done with a rope taken accidentally from the newly arrived van. On its being attached to the gate, the buffalo shewed the greatest pleasure, licking it constantly, and remained by it the whole of the night. The one in the van was equally eager to join the other, thus proving that scent alone made them aware of the approach of one of their species.

Badgers, those solitary and persecuted animals, are enabled probably to find each other by scent alone, as I have never yet heard them utter any sound, neither have I been able to find out, by inquiring of poachers, or other persons in the habit of taking them, that any cry or call has been made by them. Buffon, and some other writers on Natural History, have affirmed that the badger digs up wasp's nests for the sake of the honey.

I have no doubt of their destroying the nests of these insects for the sake of the young wasps, and thus fulfilling one of the designs of Providence, in keeping down too great an accumulation of those noxious insects; but it is extraordinary that Buffon should be ignorant of the fact that wasps do not deposit honey in their nests.

Foxes utter most expressive sounds, and their young are perfectly acquainted with them.* A celebrated poacher and taker of foxes, now engaged in a better calling, informed me that when he has been in woods at night, the howl of foxes would sometimes be incessant. At that time the cubs would come fearlessly out of the earths, but if the old ones, aware of his being in the wood, uttered a peculiar and sharp scream, they immediately retired into them, and nothing would then induce them to come out. He told me, that he has been for hours in a tree, waiting to see if the cubs would come out, and fall into a hole he had dug at the mouth of the earth and baited with a fowl, but they never stirred if once they had heard the scream of the old foxes. His only chance of taking them was by poisoning the old

* They vary their tones according to circumstances. Sometimes they bark and yelp, and at others are said to utter a melancholy cry like that of a peacock. They have also a peculiar cry when suffering from pain, but they never utter any in the agonies of death.

ones, which he did with arsenic rubbed into the paunch of a fresh killed animal. When they were dead, hunger at length drove the cubs out, and they were either taken in nets or the pit-fall. When he had accidentally secured a young fox, without destroying the parents, these, on hearing the cry of their cub, would come almost close up to him, evincing the greatest anxiety and distress, and uttering plaintive cries. Indeed the affection of foxes for their young is quite extraordinary, and the person I have referred to assured me, that when they have considered their cubs to be in danger, or the place of their retreat to have been discovered, they have conveyed them to considerable distances in their mouths. Foxes have so much sense, that when infested with fleas, they have been known to cover themselves with water, except their head, in which place the fleas necessarily took shelter, and from whence they were readily shaken off. In doing this they retreat gently backwards into the water.

A fox kept in a kennel in the yard of an inn at Girvan in Ayrshire, where there were some poultry, which he always eyed with a considerable wish to make his prey, had recourse to the following plan to secure one or two of them occasionally. When the servant brought his food he would eat a part of it, but leave some scattered about. He then retreated into his kennel and feigned himself

to be asleep. In this state he patiently watched for the fowls to come and partake of the food he had left, when he would spring upon and kill one of them. This is an extraordinary instance of the sagacity and almost of the reasoning faculty of a fox.

The Mole, probably, like the badger, utters no noise whatever, at least I never heard it make any. It is, therefore, probable that they find each other by the scent only,* and this they will do, not only under the ground but on its surface, where the males may sometimes be seen fighting desperately. The Hedge-hog also is nearly a mute animal, the young, however, make cries when they are hungry. Guinea-pigs, of which a very great number are kept in pens by Her Majesty at Windsor, have three distinct tones, which are very expressive. When they appear happy, and are enjoying the sunshine of a fine summer's day, they have a complacent tone which it is difficult to describe. They squeak when frightened, and have a sort of grunt when they want to express their desires. It is a most uninteresting animal, and, as has been said of it, is devoid of sense and docility, though incessantly restless. It is tame from stupidity, and harmless from impotence.

* In proof of this I may add, that Mole-catchers are in the habit of rubbing a dead mole against the trap they are setting for others, considering that they are attracted by the smell.

Bats make a little squeaking noise when disturbed or frightened. I have discovered that the Noctule or Altivolans bat migrates in considerable numbers, and may be called gregarious. I have observed it flying near Wimbledon high in the air, and long before the sun had set. It certainly feeds on young birds, and takes possession of those holes in trees, in which there are broods of starlings. On thrusting a stick into one of these holes in a tree, I have driven out a considerable number of these large bats, who returned to it after flying about for some time. Strong light, therefore, does not seem to affect them, and as a further proof of it, I may mention that a migration of some twenty or thirty of these bats took place in the middle of the day in spring. The garden-labourers at Hampton Court were at work near a lime tree, in which was a hole about eight feet from the ground, this hole led to the nest of a starling, in which there were young ones more than half grown. The men heard the noise of the flight of the bats, and saw them all enter the hole. I was very shortly afterwards made acquainted with the circumstance, and on repairing to the spot, was soon convinced that the bats had killed the young starlings, and probably the old birds, as I never saw them near the spot afterwards. It is, therefore, not improbable that these voracious animals migrate occasionally in search

of food in the spring, until the peculiar flies or moths on which they feed in summer are sufficiently numerous to sustain them. It is, I believe, the largest of our various bats, measuring from the tip of one wing to that of the other from fifteen to sixteen inches. I have kept them alive for some time, but they are very offensive.

Some Insects utter sounds, such as the death-watch (Ptinus fatidicus), a sort of ticking noise, and the house-cricket. A young queen Bee, generally the evening before she quits the hive with a swarm, utters a very plaintive cry. I can have little doubt that it is produced from the throat, and not by the action of the wings, as I have frequently taken one of those stingless bees, we find in the autumn on sun-flowers and other plants, and on preventing any action whatever of the wings, I have heard it utter the same mournful and distressed cry as that of the queen bee. The Field-Cricket makes a cry which every lover of nature must delight to hear, "filling his mind," as Mr. White observes, with a train of "Summer ideas of every thing that is rural, verdurous, and joyous." But it is time to conclude this desultory notice of the tones of animals,* which I will do by re-

* The Tench is the only fresh-water fish which I have ever heard produce a sound. It is said to be made through its bronchial opercula. The sound is so distressing to hear, that I have quitted my hold of a tench, when taking a hook out of its mouth, from its unpleasantness, and the surprise it occasioned me.

ferring to the call of the Corn-crake, one of those sounds, which may be heard on a still summer's evening, and which is very pleasing to me, although it has been considered harsh* and discordant.

> Poor bird, though harsh thy note, I love it well,
> It tells of summer eves, mild and serene.

* The Latin name of this bird, CREX, (whence our "Crake,") is taken from the sound of its call. The French name the bird, "Le Roi des Cailles," the King of the Quails. It is most plentiful on the southern coasts of Kent, Sussex and Hampshire. Its call is usually heard late in the evening.

It was no small matter of satisfaction to me, to find that you were not displeased with my little *methodus* of birds.

GILBERT WHITE.

I LIKE the little *faunas* which are now and then made by gentlemen residing in the country, of the birds and plants to be found in their immediate neighbourhood. They are always interesting to a naturalist, and it is to be regretted that more of them are not kept by those who have the time and opportunity of doing so. I have occasionally one of these lists sent me, accompanied by observations of the habits of birds, and I receive it with much pleasure. Indeed I may say with Mr. White, that my fondness for natural history, "has led me to the acquaintance of many gentlemen, whose intelligent communications have afforded me much pleasing information; and that the pursuit of it has contributed to the health of my body, and the cheerfulness and peace of my mind."

The following remarks are extracted from some communications made to me by an "out-door naturalist," to which I have added a list of the birds in his immediate neighbourhood. They will not, I am sure, prove unacceptable to some of my readers. My correspondent resides in Somersetshire.

"In the winter, Magpies assemble to roost together in large flocks. In a wood near me, there were hundreds, I might almost say thousands, that came there regularly every evening, flying in from all directions. They formerly frequented an orchard on the opposite side of the valley to which the wood is situated, but having been shot at, they deserted it for the wood. The next evening not one magpie came to the orchard, but all went simultaneously to the wood, as if they had previously agreed amongst themselves to do so. In moonlight nights they might be seen clustering together on the trees."

This gregarious propensity of magpies I have witnessed, especially in open countries. In the enclosed parts of England, they are more commonly seen in pairs or in families, like the jay and titmouse. In cold frosty weather, magpies will cluster together on trees, as if to keep each other warm, and then the masses appear like large black lumps. This circumstance was confirmed to me by the late Mr. Allan Cunningham, whose loss I deplore in common with many of his friends and acquaintance. My correspondent continues: —

"I have seen a curious instance of birds of very different habits and nature, such as the sparrow-hawk, jackdaw, green woodpecker, nuthatch and wren; all building, and having either eggs or young ones at the same time, either on or in the

same tree. There is an old oak tree near a place at which I was residing, the heart of which is completely decayed. On the topmost branches a pair of sparrow-hawks had made them a nest, which, at the time I examined it, contained four eggs. In a hollow of the tree, near the top, was a jackdaw's nest, with five young ones. A little lower, a woodpecker had another, with five eggs in it. Still lower, was a nuthatch's nest, with seven young ones. And near the foot of the tree, in one of the crevices of the bark, which was overgrown with ivy, a pair of wrens had made another nest, in which were several eggs. These birds seemed to live in perfect harmony, as I watched them frequently.

"I have been so fortunate as to find a redwing's nest, the only instance I have heard of in this country. Only one bird appeared to attend the nest, which contained but one egg. This solitary bird had, probably, from some cause or other, been unable to attend its congeners in their annual flight from this country. It was afterwards shot, and is now, with the egg, in my possession.

"I have lately had some curious varieties of birds sent to me, viz. a white thrush, a greenfinch quite white, except a slight green blush on the breast and wings; a sparrow of a bright dun colour, and another with white wings and tail. A man, also, at Bath, caught a white bullfinch."

LIST OF BIRDS CHIEFLY KILLED IN SOMERSETSHIRE, WITH THE PLACES WHERE THEY WERE MET WITH.

Sea Eagle (Falco ossifragus) — Chewton Mendip.
Buzzard (Falco buteo) — Cawston; shot whilst devouring a hen-pheasant.
Hobby (Falco subbuteo) — Box; a female.
Harrier (Falco cyaneus) — Claverton, near Bath.
Kite (Falco milvus) — Compton.
Alpine Vulture (Vultur Percnopterus) — Kilve, near Bridgewater.
Long-eared Owl (Strix otus) — Compton; found dead in the river.
Short-eared Owl (Strix brachyotus) — Glastonbury Moor.
Little Owl (Noctua passerina) — Tiverton.
Ash-coloured Shrike (Lanius excubitor) — Wells.
Nut-cracker (Nucifraga caryocatactes) — Bridgewater.
Chatterer (Ampelis garrulus) — Claverton.
Great-spotted Woodpecker (Picus viridis) — near Bath.
Striped Woodpecker (Picus major) — near Bath.
Hoopoe (Upupa epops) — Compton.
Crossbill (Loxia curvirostra) — Victoria Park, Bath; three shot from a large flock.

Grosbeak (Loxia coccothraustes) — Compton; bred there.

Tawny-bunting (Emberiza nivalis) — Mendip Hills; in flocks.

Cirl Bunting (Emberiza cirlus) — A pair shot between Wells and Glastonbury.

Mountain Finch (Fringilla montifringilla) — Claverton.

Siskin (Fringilla spinus) — Compton; on the Alder trees by the side of the river.

Greater Redpole (Fring. cannabina) — Burnet.

Lesser Redpole (Fring. linaria) — Compton; flocks with the Siskin.

Ring Ousel (Turdus torquatus) — near Bath; a female.

Golden Plover (Charadrius pluvialis) — Mendip Hills.

Dottrel (Char. morinellus) — Mendip Hills.

Spotted Rail (Gallinula Porzana) — Six shot on Glastonburry Moor.

Egret (Ardea garzetta) — Glastonbury Moor.

Bittern (Ardea stellaris) —Glastonbury Moor.

Squacco Heron (*Ardea comata*) — purchased in Bath Market.

Whimbrel (Scolopax phæopus) — Bridgewater.

Great Snipe (Scolopax major) — Glastonbury Moor.

Cinereous Godwit (Scolopax canescens) — Wells.

Gambet (Tringa gambetta) — Bridgewater.

Phalarope (Tringa lobata) — Weston Super Mare.
Great-crested Grebe (Colymbus glacialis) — River Avon.
Red-throated Diver (Colym. septentrionalis) — Minehead.
Black Tern (Sterna fissipes) — Axbridge.
Kittiwake (Larus rissa) — Bridgewater.
Black-toed Gull (Larus crepidatus) — Watchet.
Fork-tailed Petrel (Procellaria Leachii) — Two found dead in a wood at Ham, near Plymouth.
Dun Diver (Mergus castor) — Weston Super Mare.
Lough Diver or Smew (Mergus albellus) — River Avon.
Wild Swan (Anas cygnus) — Glastonbury.
Laughing Goose (Anas albifrons) — Bath Market.
Brent Goose (Anas Bernicla) — Weston Super Mare.
Gadwall (Anas strepera) — River Avon.
Shoveler (Anas clypeata) — Glastonbury Moor.
Tufted Duck (Anas fuligula) — Glastonbury Moor.
Cormorant (Pelicanus corbo) — Sea Coast.
Little Gull (Larus minutus) — Minehead.

LIST OF THE MIGRATORY BIRDS IN SUFFOLK, IN 1835, WITH THE DATE OF THEIR FIRST APPEARANCE.

Starlings (Sturnus vulgaris)—These birds appeared in immense flocks, coming from the direction of the large sea-fens and marshes on the Suffolk coast. On the 16th of March, a flight passed along from a quarter to 4 o'clock till a few minutes past 5. They went in a north-westerly direction.

Wryneck (Yunx torquilla)—March 29th. These birds, directly on their arrival, seem to prepare for their nidification. A male of this species, the day after its first appearance, found out a suitable place for building in a hollow tree, and sat the whole day, half in and half out of the hole, incessantly calling as if to attract a mate. Wryneck seen on the 15th of October.

Wheatear (Motacilla œnanthe) . .	April 3
Martin (Hirundo urbica) . . .	4
Reed Warbler (Curruca arundinacea) . .	6
Great Pettychaps (Motacilla hortensis) . .	7
Redstart (Sylvia phœnicurus) . .	8
Grasshopper Lark (Curruca locustella) . .	8
Willow Wren (Motacilla trochilus) . .	8
Swallow (Hirundo rustica) . . .	10
Lesser Pettychaps (Sylvia hippolais) . .	10

Black-cap (Sylvia atricapilla)	April 10
Cuckoo (Cuculus canorus)	11
Sand-martin (Hirundo riparia)	12
White-throat (Sylvia cinerea)	12
Nightingale (Sylvia luscinia)	13
Reed Warbler (Sylvia salicaria)	16
Whinchat (Sylvia rubetra) — partial migration	16
Land-Rail (Gallinula crex)	16
Swift* (Hirundo apus)	18
Willow Wren (Sylvia arundinacea)	23
Norfolk Plover (Charadrius œdicnemus)	23
Fly-catcher (Muscicapa griseola)	May 2
Red-backed Shrike (Lanius collurio)	5

* Just after the first appearance of Swifts this year, there was a remarkably cold day, preceded by two as particularly warm. This cold day completely torpified the Swifts, and they clustered together in lumps or masses, something like a swarm of bees. A large cluster of these birds were seen hanging to the water-spout of Harwich church. Some boys were able, with poles, to knock them down, and many were caught. A few only were able to fly away, so benumbed and torpid had the greater part of them become.

TIME OF THE NIDIFICATION OF SOME OF OUR BRITISH BIRDS IN SUFFOLK, IN 1835.

Wren (Sylvia troglodytes)	March 21
Rook (Corvus frugilegus)	23
Missel Thrush (Turdus viscivorus)	24
Blackbird (Turdus merula)	24
Thrush (Turdus musicus)	27
Golden-crested Wren (Sylvia regulus)	28
Robin (Sylvia rubecula)	April 2
Wood-pigeon (Columba palumbus)	2
Great Tit-mouse (Parus major)	4
Hedge-Sparrow (Sylvia modularis)	4
Long-tailed Titmouse (Parus caudatus)	8
Jay (Corvus glandarius)	8
Sparrow (Fringilla domestica)	14
Chaffinch (Fringilla cælebs)	14
Starling (Sturnus vulgaris)	14
Greenfinch (Loxia chloris)	17
Bullfinch (Loxia pyrrhula)	17
Blue Titmouse (Parus cæruleus)	17
Linnet (Fringilla linota)	23
Stonechat (Sylvia rubicola)	23
Whinchat (Sylvia rubetra)	23
Willow Wren (Motacilla trochilus)	25
Blackcap (Sylvia atricapilla)	27
Redstart (Sylvia phœnicurus)	29

Wagtail (Motacilla alba)	May 2
White-throat (Sylvia cinerea)	2
Sparrow Hawk (Falco nisus)	7
Turtle Dove (Columba turtur)	16
Kestrel (Falco tinnunculus)	19
Red-backed Shrike (Lanius collurio)	27
Fly-catcher (Muscicapa griseola)	June 3

I may mention, in concluding this paper, and with reference to the large flock of starlings which was seen, that these birds appear to congregate earlier in the Autumn than any others. They are extremely sociable in their disposition; and when they quit the nest, keep together in families for a short time, and then join with others until they form the vast flocks we see in meadows. No birds appear to have so much *conversation*, if the term may be used, as Starlings, especially when they visit their roosting-places in the evening; they seem, then, to be congratulating each other with no small degree of satisfaction.

DICK ROOK.

A SCETCH FROM THE LIFE.

Ah! what a life were this — how sweet! how lovely!
Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds, looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy,
To kings, that fear their subjects' treachery?
O yes, it doth; a thousand fold it doth.
And to conclude,— the shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
Is far beyond a prince's delicates.

SHAKSPEARE'S HENRY VI. Part III. 2. 5.

In my various walks and rambles in the country, I frequently meet with odd and amusing characters. I am in the habit of talking to strangers, whenever a fit opportunity presents itself for doing so, and although some of my friends have prognosticated that I shall some time or other get myself into a scrape by indulging in this propensity, such has never yet been the case. Indeed, I always find that a little civility of manner, a trifling apology, or the offer of a pinch of snuff on a proper occasion, invariably produce civility in return. I may add, that I never yet met with that person from whom I could not extract either some information, or gain some insight into cha-

racter. Chelsea or Greenwich pensioners, are generally very communicative, and prolific of anecdote. I have also occasionally met with superannuated fishermen, shrimpers, or periwinkle collectors in sea-bathing towns, who are very conversable, and who delight in a sunny corner, where they bask with folded arms, either talking over their past adventures, or prognosticating the state of the weather. An old fellow, clad in a patched coat, with an habitual stoop, and a dirty-flag basket on his arm, in which he deposits bones, bits of wood or iron, has often a good deal to say. He is, however, very inferior to those cyclops-like figures, who are sometimes to be seen, with sacks on their backs, lurking about in odd corners and out of the way places, scraping amongst cinders and dust-holes for hidden treasures. They certainly have a larcenous look, and are generally blear-eyed, but then they have a thorough knowledge of the world, and would furnish materials for a biographical history of that industrious class of the community, called cinder-pickers.

Having thus confessed one of my peculiarities, it will appear that I must be tolerably well acquainted with the character of some of the poorer class. I am aware of the odd sort of drudgery many of them undergo in order to procure a living, and I am sorry to add the privations they suffer,

and this very often with a gentle and quiet humility. The subject, however, is painful, and moreover it is time to say something of Dick Rook, the hero of my story.

Some years had passed, since I first met with Dick. I was with a shooting party on a wild heath in Sussex, when I first fell in with this singular character. At that time he was dressed in a coat much too long for him, with a pair of trousers much too short. He had no stockings, but a pair of high shoes tied with pack-thread, graced his legs. His beard was of a considerable growth, his eye-brows were shaggy, and his hat had something very characteristic about it. His countenance gave indications of great good humour, and at the same time shewed much boldness and decision. He had a formidable stick in his hand, with which he now and then brushed a furze-bush as he passed it, for the purpose of starting a hare or a rabbit. I found, on enquiry, that there was not a battue in the county within twenty miles of the spot, at which Dick usually *hung out*, where he was not to be met with. He was a sort of privileged person in the servants' halls of the neighbouring gentry, and was much employed in conveying presents of game from one house to another, for which he was tolerably well paid. He was moreover a trusty assistant to game-keepers, when any poaching was going forward,

and had met with much rough usage on several of these occasions. Dick had, however, his own peculiar notions on some subjects, and nothing could induce him to give his evidence against poachers, provided there was a fair stand-up fight with sticks between them and the party he accompanied. If, however, a gun was called in aid of the marauders, or he could detect any skulking fellow in the act of setting snares, he had no hesitation in appearing as a witness against the offenders. This had been the case the day before I had met him, and was the occasion of my becoming acquainted with some parts of his character, previously to his accompanying the party I have referred to.

The first sight of Dick Rook impressed me with the conviction that he was no common man, and the conversations I subsequently held with him, only served to confirm this impression. At the time I am speaking of, he assured me that there was no place he could call his home, and that he never wished to sleep in the inside of a house. A barn, a cow-shed, or the shelter of a hay-rick were his nocturnal places of resort, and in summer, he said, there was nothing like sleeping under a tree. Amongst the many questions I put to him, one was whether he ever went to Church. "No," said Dick, "I never go to those places — I have no right there." No right, why

what do you mean? "You see," replied Dick, "I never pays those rates to the parson that other folks do, and so I have no business there, But," continued he, "I have often laid myself down under that oak tree there, and seen the moon and the stars through the boughs, and then" said he "I prays. Don't you think, master, that God Almighty can hear me there as well as in one of them Churches, and then how fine it is to watch the stars, and to think that He made them all as well as a poor man like me."

In his manners Dick was exceedingly respectful, and very unlike some of those "free and easy" vagabonds who are occasionally to be met with. He at once gave the impression that he had associated with gentlemen, listening to their conversation during their shooting parties, and occasionally giving his opinion on some knotty point relating to the sport of the day. There was, however, neither too much freedom nor any degree of servility in his manner, although he would sometimes shew the pride of independence, and could not bear to have it thought, that the life he was leading could confer any taint on his character. His strict honesty was never doubted, nor was he ever detected in uttering a falsehood.

From what has been said of his peculiar habits, it may be supposed that his capabilities of endurance were very great. Such was the case. He

appeared not to take the least account of the weather. He would walk, or sit in the rain with as much composure and unconsciousness as a duck or a northern diver; — his skin seemed to have become callous and insensible either to cold or wet, and he trusted his body to the inclemencies of the skies, as confidently as if it were covered with a water-proof cloak. His looks, on the day I first saw him, which was any thing but a warm one, were quite polar. A crystal drop hung like a gem at his nose, and a bitter north-easter made his eye stream with tears, freezing as they fell.

It must not be supposed from what has been said of his habits and mode of passing his time, that his life, apparently so destitute of all that is commonly looked upon as pleasurable, or comfortable, must necessarily have been a miserable one. Far from it. He was not only cheerful as well as patient, but the very life he led, gave him an interest in the common revolutions of the seasons. He had found out the great secret of ease and contentment, in having always something before him that he considered worth doing. He attached much importance to the opportunity of attending a battue, or in following a neighbouring pack of beagles, which his knowledge of the country enabled him to keep up with tolerably well. Sometimes he would find a hare sitting, on which occasion he received the usual fee. In the

summer, he not only had his own peculiar enjoyment of the gentle winds and soft breezes, accompanied with a delightful sunshine, but he would bivouac near a trout-stream, and catch fish for the table of a neighbouring squire; for which he was rewarded with a small sum of money, or a good dinner or supper. Sometimes he was employed to assist in catching rabbits or vermin, and when he had nothing else to do, he would make his way down to the coast, and there he either shrimped or prawned, collected stray pieces of wood or whatever he could find on the sea-shore. In this way he gained, as he said, an honest living, and yet at the same time enjoyed that sort of freedom and independence, without which it was evident that life would have been irksome to him.

Such was Dick Rook, and the more I saw or heard of him, the more inclined I felt to become better acquainted with him. This was not difficult during my protracted visit in the neighbourhood, at which time this vagrant, as I sometimes heard him called, was my constant companion. His love of natural scenery, and quick perception of what was beautiful in the little sequestered dells, which are to be met with in the west of Sussex, and the more expansive views from his favourite heaths, were very striking, and his admiration of them was always happily expressed. It was in

one of these moments, that I was tempted to read to him the following lines descriptive of the do[illegible] we saw before us, in order to see what effect they would produce on him. It was perhaps the first time in his life that Dick had heard any poetry, with the exception of the country ditties trolled out in a servants' hall, or the kitchen of an ale-house. I felt sure, however, that a man who had so true a feeling for the beauties of nature, would not be insensible to a description of her charms, or of the haunts he delighted in.

Hail, happy scenes of past delight!
Thrice welcome to the memory's sight!
For though thy landscapes, nature blest,
In every vivid tint are drest;
Though fertile vales, and verdant down
And mantling beech thy prospects crown —
Though Arun fam'd for classic strains
Roll its soft stream along thy plains,
And Neptune bound thy shore;
Yet shall the fond remember'd hour,
Embody forms with brighter pow'r,
To group thy landscapes o'er.

How oft the spirit-breathing horn
Has cheer'd on yonder hill the morn —
Oft has my gun alarm'd that wood —
Oft have I bath'd in yon clear flood —
On that smooth hillock's velvet green
In village pomp the dance I've seen —
But ah! midst scenes so gay, so dear,
Why softly steals th' unbidden tear
At sight of yonder grove?

> There first my heart its hopes betray'd,
> Beneath that hawthorn's conscious shade
> Fair Emma own'd her love.

This allusion to the "fair Emma" appeared to touch some chord in Dick's heart, and we shall find that he was not insensible to the tender passion of love. Exposure, however, to the sun and wind had produced such an extraordinary tan on his skin, making it appear somewhat like the bark of a tree, that I should have supposed his frame had been rendered impervious to the blandishments of female charms. Yet rough as it was, his countenance had an expression of great mildness and benevolence.

Dick's early prospects in life had been promising, and it is evident that he had not forgotten them. "That cottage," said he to me one day, pointing to a distant spot, "with the two or three fields about it, was my father's own property. I was his only child; and when my mother died, every thing went wrong. Somehow or other he got into the hands of lawyers, and then into the ale-house. He soon died in great distress. Every thing was sold; and I was turned a young lad on the world, to find my own way. I shall never forget leaving the cottage, with nothing but the clothes on my back, and a little dog that followed me. I wandered some distance not knowing where to go, and when night came on, I got into a barn where

I found a beggar eating some scraps of food he had collected. He let me share a part of them with him, and gave the bones to my dog, so that we did very well the first night. I stuck to the beggar for some time, as he was very kind to me, till he was taken up for a vagrant, and then I had to provide for myself and the dog.

"The world was before me, and I knew not what to do or where to go, but I kept up my spirits as well as I could; and I really think that I felt more for my dog than myself, when he looked up into my face, and I had nothing to give him. Well, as I wandered about, I found a snug place on the heath, in a little hollow, with some sandstone rock about it. Here I collected plenty of heather and fern, and made myself as comfortable as I could at night, and when I awoke in the morning, the sun shone full upon me. Ah, master," continued Dick, "no one but those who, like myself, have lived all their lives in the open air, can tell the pleasure of seeing the sun rise, and feeling the warmth it gives. I often think that God Almighty intended it as a blessing more for the poor than the rich, because we see more of it, and are more grateful for it. But I must go on with what I was saying, as you want to know something about me. The next day I was sadly put to it for something to eat; and when the poor animal looked at me, as if to ask me for something, I

began to cry for the first time since I left home. I was, however, a hardy lad, with a sufficiency of clothes on my back to keep out the weather, and so I set off to try what I could do. I soon arrived at an encampment of gypsies, who gave me something to eat, and recommended me to station myself at the top of a neighbouring hill, and to lock the wheels of carriages. In this way I earned halfpence enough to support myself, besides sometimes picking bilberries, which I sold readily enough. To be sure, the devil sometimes tempted me to do what I ought not, for I had plenty of bad examples before me, the poor people of Sussex not being better than their neighbours. But I kept myself honest, and nothing can be said against me on that score. In time I grew to be a man; and what with helping keepers, who gave me a good word to their masters, and doing the best I could for myself, I managed to get on better than some others. Indeed, the gentlemen about these parts are very kind to me, and would miss me, if absent, at their grand shooting parties."

Such was Dick Rook's little history; but he suppressed a part of it, with which I afterwards became acquainted. It appears, that in the course of his vagabond life, he had wandered to that part of the borders of Sussex, where there is a wild and dreary tract, near the place well known as the Devil's Punch-bowl. On the top of the hill, after

the Punch-bowl is passed, there is a sort of hut alehouse, close to the spot where Queen Anne is supposed to have sat to view the herds of red deer, as they were driven past her. At some distance at the back of this hut, and in a hollow, were three or four rude cottages, inhabited some years ago by a set of persons, who procured a precarious livelihood by pilfering, poaching, and bilberry picking. In one of these hovels, for some cause or other, Dick had been in the habit of taking up an occasional abode. Its inmates consisted of a man and his wife, and an only daughter, for whom Dick it would appear had formed an attachment. There was, however, much of mystery in the sentiment he felt for her. His pride and poverty, probably, prevented his endeavouring to make her his wife; and the life he led must have convinced him that he had no chance of ever having a home to offer her. He assiduously attended her to the slopes of the hill, and assisted her in collecting bilberries, which are there found in considerable quantities, and produce a good price in the neighbouring market-town. Susan Jones was pretty, coquettish, and somewhat slatternly. Like many of her class in life, she had strong likings and dislikings. She would flirt with one man and abuse another: sometimes all smiles, and at others all passion and revenge. Dick bore with patience all her waywardness, and treated her more with the affection of a father than with that

of a lover. He endeavoured to sooth her temper when it was most violent, and to warn her when any man of bad character appeared likely to become a favourite with her. In this way he certainly acquired a strong ascendency over her, but in what other way his affection was returned, does not appear.

During one of Dick's temporary absences from the cottage, Susan went to London to pay a visit to a relation. He heard nothing of her for many months, neither could he procure any information of her from her parents. One day on visiting the cottage, where he frequently went in hopes of finding Susan returned to it, a dirty letter was put into his hands; it was from Susan, telling him that she was going to be married to a man well to do in the world, but that nothing should induce her to do so, unless Dick came up to London to give her away. All his hopes appear to have vanished. The only being he loved, was about to be lost to him for ever. He left the cottage, and wandered about he knew not, nor cared not, where. Susan's letter was unanswered, and was likely to remain so; for Dick concluded, that not seeing him, she would not continue in the resolution she had expressed: but Susan was not a person likely to be thwarted in any determination she had formed. At the end of about a fortnight, a letter was brought to Dick from her, telling him that

she would not be married till he was present; that if he did not come, all her prospects of becoming a respectable woman would be ruined; and imploring him to come and see her. The letter was received in the evening, and Dick's resolution was immediately taken. Late as it was, he began his journey towards London, having only, as he afterwards informed me, twopence-halfpenny in his pocket. With this trifling sum, he walked a distance of forty-seven miles, and arrived at the abode of Susan early in the morning. He refused to eat in her house, accompanied her to church, saw her married, and immediately set off to return to his old haunts. No entreaties of Susan could induce him to enter the house of her husband, or to partake of the wedding feast. Dick said it would have choked him. When he was first seen on his return by his old associates, he looked miserable and haggard. Since that time he has rallied; but there can be no doubt that the loss of Susan has preyed deeply on his mind, and destroyed much of the elasticity of his early character.

On quitting the neighbourhood where I first met with Dick, I lost sight of him, nor did I see him again for some years afterwards. He left, however, that impression on my mind which made me frequently think of him. I made many enquiries respecting him, but found that he had but very rarely been seen in his old and favourite haunts.

It was some years after this, and on a fine autumnal evening, that one of the Portsmouth coaches deposited me within a couple of miles of the residence of the friend I was about to visit. I hired a man to convey my carpet-bag and gun-case to the house, and walked merrily on enjoying the beauty of the evening. The fox-glove still shewed a small remainder of blossom on the upper spike, and some modest little flowers sparkled on the sand-banks by the side of the deep lane along which my road lay. Here and there a brown hazel nut which had escaped the search of the neighbouring peasant boys, reminded me of my school-gone days; and the call of numerous partridges, the cooing of ring-doves, and the heavy flight of rooks on their way to their roosting trees, all added to the enjoyment of my walk. How charming is nature, and how much is there to delight and amuse us in her instructive volume! The offerings of those pretty plants, which Flora presents to us with so much grace, beguile and sweeten our rural walks. Every thing speaks of freshness, repose, and beauty; and insensible must that heart be to all the blessings of a benevolent Providence, who can pass by the works of His creation, unmindful of the hand which bestowed them, or without feeling grateful for the various objects of enjoyment, which have been so lavishly spread before him.

On arriving at the house of my kind friend, I

found him surrounded by some sporting acquaintances, who, like myself, had come either to shoot, or to enjoy the pleasure of a visit to the country. An English gentleman should always be seen at his seat in the country; there we meet with unaffected hospitality, good society, good living, good shooting, and many agrémens which are peculiar to such a place. If I wanted to make a foreigner acquainted with the character of an Englishman, he should spend his Christmas in the country, and partake of the hospitalities of a country-house.

After a good dinner, and a night's rest, I strolled the next morning into the stable-yard; on entering it, I observed a man surrounded with pointers and setters, listlessly employing himself in twirling the end of a hazel switch among the pebbles, and apparently lost in his own thoughts. On approaching him he looked up, and to my great surprize, I discovered that the individual in question was no other than my old acquaintance, Dick Rook, somewhat improved in his outward appearance. Our greeting was cordial on both sides; but I could not help expressing my wonder at finding him in his present situation. My curiosity was soon satisfied; Dick's erratic propensities had not forsaken him; and on one of his excursions to attend a distant battue, he had fallen in with my host. Something about Dick struck his fancy, and on hearing a part of his little

history, he felt sufficient interest in him to tell him, that he would give him occasional employment in assisting to protect his game. Nor did his wish to serve Dick rest here. With that goodness of heart for which all his friends love him, Dick's spiritual, as well as his bodily wants, were attended to by him. He was recommended to go to church; and in order to induce him to do so, it was hinted to him that if he did not, his neighbours would suppose that he was too wicked to be seen there. Dick's pride, probably, took the alarm, and he constantly attended at church every Sunday evening. He had a room in a small cottage on one of the banks of the sand-stone-lane I have already referred to; and what with dining and supping at the hall, when he pleased, and some pecuniary assistance, Dick got on tolerably well, and expressed great gratitude for the kindness shewn him. He was an especial favourite in the house; and taught the young gentlemen to ride, fly kites, and fish. He looked after the dogs and poachers, and made himself generally useful.

Having gained all these particulars of my old acquaintance, our party set off on a shooting excursion, which he, as a matter of course, attended. I had now a better opportunity of observing him. He had the same honest, weather-beaten countenance, which had struck me so much

when I first saw him; but there was a certain degree of melancholy evidently hanging about him, and I fancied that he looked ill. As we proceeded, the morning's mist disappeared, and the sun broke out cheerfully. Dick hunted the dogs with great skill, and now and then gave an opinion as to the best places for finding game. We traversed a sort of moor, or wild common, on our way to some covers on the other side of it. We met here and there with patches of heath or furze, from which we occasionally started a hare or rabbit. Sometimes we surrounded a swamp, in which were stunted willows growing, covered with moss hanging down in flakes, the haunt of a solitary teal and occasionally of snipes. Beyond the moor there was a long range of abruptly rising ground, covered with trees, and called in Sussex, a *hanger*—a name which Gilbert White has rendered interesting to every lover of country scenery. Before, however, we could arrive at the hangers, we had to pass along one of those deep lanes so peculiar to this part of the country. The sides of these lanes are formed to a considerable height of sandy rock, upon which are scattered many beautiful and graceful ferns. The wild strawberry, that pretty fragaria, whose fruit and blossom might be seen at the same time, was in great profusion; fox-gloves, potentillas, violets, cistuses, primroses, and many varieties of other wild plants, might also be found

in abundance at their proper seasons. The lane was gracefully arched over with the branches of stunted oaks, whose roots here and there spread themselves out in all directions, appearing in search of some crevice in which they might insert themselves. The branches were entangled with woodbines, and intermixed with hazels, some of whose long shoots had been pulled down by boys in search of nuts, and hung in disorder beneath the beautiful arch above. As we walked along, the sand was so soft and yielding, that our footsteps were as silent as if we trod on a carpet.

I delight in these charming rural lanes, especially in the Spring and Summer. They are the haunt of the nightingale and thrush. Their banks are enamelled with various flowers, and here and there a few drops of the purest water seem to have been distilled from some portion of rock, and trickle down its surface, nourishing in their course a variety of pretty mosses of the most delicate shapes and hues. The shade is delightful, though now and then a gleam of sun is admitted,

> Just where the parting boughs light shadows play,

which gives a warmth and cheerfulness to the scene.

Once, and only once, it was my good fortune to pass along one of my favourite lanes on a fine autumnal evening, as the sun was setting in all its

glory, and I shall never forget the glowing scene. The rays of the departing luminary penetrated through the arched roof of the lane, or burst from some occasional opening, and made the bank appear of a vivid redness, which those only can imagine, who have wandered amidst the haunts of Nature.

As we emerged from the lane, we came immediately to the foot of a hanger, (we were then in the neighbourhood of Selborne,) and saw its precipitous and craggy slopes above us. The brown leaves of Autumn were adorning the beech trees, and their "graceful and pendulous boughs" almost swept the ground. It is my favourite tree, and one of the most lovely of those which are indigenous in this country.

> See, the fading many coloured woods,
> Shade deepening over shade, the country round
> Imbrown.*

Hollies, with their glossy green leaves and clustering red berries, were interspersed here and there, sometimes affording support to a straggling honeysuckle, or growing round the trunk of one of the beeches. The very genius of Gilbert White seemed to haunt the spot; and while the rest of the party were pursuing their sport, my imagination dwelt on that charming naturalist, and on the scenes which he delighted in and loved to describe. I

* THOMSON.

could fancy the annual appearance of the surly truffle hunter with his cur dog,—Old Thomas, scattering beech-mast about "Baker's Hill," for the good of posterity, and a bird flying over a chalk-bank, reminded me of the martins, which Mr. White tells us were in the habit of playing over it. Here was the little torrent, hurrying along, and winding its way down the declivity, to form a more tranquil and sparkling brook in the valley below. Here, also, were the strawberry *slidders*, the chalk-pits, with the white tower of the village church of Selborne in the distance.

I ascended the hanger, and got upon the down or sheep-walk above it; "a pleasing park-like spot, commanding a very engaging view." From this eminence, I eagerly looked for the great pond in Woolmer Forest, and for the house of the Naturalist; and indulged myself in fancying that I could see many of the localities he has noticed. The hoarse croak of a pair of ravens, which were towering above the hanger, disturbed my pleasing visions, and while I watched their evolutions, I could not but fancy that they were the offspring of those, which, for so many years, had frequented the "raven-tree" of Selborne.

I could not quit the spot without mentally paying my little tribute to the memory of Gilbert White. Happy man, thought I, in this sequestered spot, undisturbed by ambition or the tumults

of the world, you passed your life contributing to the happiness of the poor, and the recreations of the young. Your kindly feelings were rewarded by the love of those around you, who seem to have joined in your favourite and innocent pursuits, for the mere pleasure of adding to your gratification. The hoary labourer watched for the arrival of your favourite bird, while each little urchin hastened to you with the tidings of a fern-owl's nest, or brought some trifling offering of Nature's creation. Here, in the shades of Selborne, "so lovely and sweet," you wrote that charming volume which has delighted thousands, and will continue to delight thousands yet unborn. Who could not envy such a life? Peace, happiness, and tranquillity, were the result of your piety and benevolence; and you died at a good old age, regretted and beloved by all who knew you, and retaining your fondness for the charms of rural scenery and rural objects to the last moment of your life.

It was now growing late, and I hastened to the place where we had all agreed to meet. Our rendezvous was a little alehouse, and on arriving there, I found the party waiting for me, and the produce of the day's shooting displayed on the ground to the best advantage. Here I found Dick in a scrape. He looked somewhat sulky; and his benefactor was evidently angry with him. The fact was, that

during the first part of our walk in the morning, Dick had been liberally tipped by some of the party (myself amongst the rest), and yet he said that he had no money to pay for some refreshment, he had had at the alehouse, and which the landlord had omitted to charge when my friend paid his demand. Dick sturdily persisted that he had no money, nor would he condescend to say, what he had done with that which he had received in the morning. I saw plainly that he was suspected of having wasted it in drinking, or some other extravagance. Indeed, he was accused of the former, but he asserted that he had only partaken of bread and cheese and a pint of ale — a fact which the landlord confirmed. An unpleasant impression, however, with respect to Dick's conduct in this affair, had evidently been left on our host's mind, and we began our way homewards in silence. Dick was a favourite with us all, and we observed that look of hurt pride and independence, which he occasionally exhibited, and which were more apparent in him now than ever. "Has not a man a right to do what he pleases with his own money," he had said, when first questioned; and he refused to make any further explanation.

The mystery was soon afterwards accidentally cleared up. It appeared that in the course of the morning Dick had fallen in with a man, who, perhaps, had seen better days, but was then suffering

from illness, poverty, and old age. His tale of misery was soon told, and no sooner told, than Dick's little store of money was immediately transferred to him. "If the poor did not help those who are poorer than themselves," said Dick, "there would be much more distress in the world than we see at present. The poor best know what their fellow creatures suffer." This is perfectly true. There is, I am convinced, an intuitive faculty in the poorer classes, which enables them instantly to discover actual from pretended distress; and to their honour be it spoken, I have known relief afforded by those who were very little removed from actual want themselves.

I have already said that Dick looked ill, and it now appeared that he was so. I had not seen him for two or three days, nor could any one give me any account of him. At last my friend was informed that he had been taken unwell at a village, a few miles from the cottage where he lodged, and he immediately rode over to see him. He was in bed at an ale-house, and evidently suffering from a great degree of fever. He positively refused to see a medical man, or to have any remedy administered to him. "I know," he said, "what is the matter with me, and it is all of no use." My friend sat by him some time, but finding all his arguments of no avail, he gave him some money and promised to see him again

soon. We were informed in the evening that his patron had no sooner left him, than Dick got up, and, weak and ill as he was, had walked all the way to his cottage. I went to see him the next morning. On entering his room, I found a little girl, with a particularly open, honest countenance, and the picture of neatness, engaged in reading a chapter in the bible to Dick, who appeared to be eagerly listening to some of those merciful promises, which are so abundantly to be found in the sacred volume. Dick motioned to her to shut the book and leave the room. "That child," said Dick, "is now repaying me for the care I have taken of her. She has been doing for me what I am unable to do for myself — she reads the bible to me. Ah, Mr. —— what should I have done now without her. I am a poor, ignorant outcast, and have nothing to look back to that can give me any comfort. There is, however, in that book," pointing to the bible, "some words that make me hope I may, perhaps have my sins forgiven. She seems to know what they mean, for she reads them in a different way to what she does some of the other parts. Poor child! she little thinks that a dying man like me has nothing to comfort him, but what she reads to me."

I was much affected at seeing Dick in this state. He was evidently, as he had said, a dying man. His hardihood, his courage, his unshaken

honesty, his pride, or rather the decision of his character, all occurred to me, and here I saw him, uneducated and ignorant as he was, rough as the heaths on which the greatest part of his life had been passed, melted into gratitude and tenderness on hearing that he had a hope of pardon. I urged him to let me send a clergyman to him. This he declined. "I never spoke to one while I was well," replied he, "and I will not see one now I am ill." After using my feeble endeavours to direct his hopes to the only source from which they could be derived, he led the conversation to the little girl I had seen in the room.

I have already hinted at Dick's early attachment to Susan Jones. That it influenced his feelings during the remainder of his short life, there can be no doubt. He had now nothing to conceal from me, but he shewed much distress of mind and strong feeling, while he gave me the following little history. "I would have shelterd her from every harm," he said, "as I have seen our ragged sheep protect their young on the wild heath, when a bird of prey has attacked them, but Susan would not let me. She was always wilful, and laughed at my advice and warnings. I knew that she kept company with one of the wildest characters in the neighbourhood, who took her to dances at fairs, and to see the play-actors. Many a time have I hid myself on

the heath to watch for her coming home, which she would do sometimes late at night, or early in the morning, with that man with her. What I feared at last happened. Susan looked ill and unhappy, and the situation she was in could no longer be concealed. She went to London to see a relation, where her child was born, and which was afterwards sent to be taken care of by her father and mother. They talked of sending it to the poor-house, but I had taken a liking to the child, and I promised to do my best for it, if they would let me have it. It was a hard task at first, but I watched over her, nursed her and worked for her, and then I loved her better than ever I thought I could have loved any thing in this world. Susan knew that I had the child, and she knew that I would take care of it. She wanted to have me sent money for it, but this I would not let her do. As little Susan grew up, my affection for her increased, and I have endeavoured to do my duty by sending her to school to learn to read, and by keeping her out of the way of those who might set her a bad example. When I have come home at night, sometimes wet and tired, I thought of nothing but the pleasure she shewed at seeing me again, while I listened to her innocent talk. When I am dead," continued Dick, "I know those will take care of her, who have taken care of me." Having endeavoured to make

his mind easy on this subject, I left him apparently prepared to meet an event, which he must have known could not be far distant. Dick must have undergone great privations in order to support his charge. When offered his usual meals at my friend's house, he would drink his glass of beer and eat a piece of bread, after perhaps a day's hard work, or a night passed in watching for poachers, and the remainder of his meal he would put into his pocket. This habit at first excited surprise in the servant's hall, but it was Dick's constant practice, and the reason of it was not discovered till after his death.

An autumnal mist had begun to gather round the cottage, when I called upon him the following evening. There was the low bench by the side of the door, with a bush of lavender at the end of it. One or two blossoms still lingered on a straggling honey-suckle, and the yellow leaves of an unpruned vine were fast falling to the ground. On making my way to the door leading into Dick's room, I found that a blanket had been considerately fastened over it, either to exclude the wind, or to prevent his being disturbed by noises. I entered softly, and heard the gentle voice of little Susan reading the bible. Dick was sitting in a chair by the side of the bed, and Susan rested the bible on his knees. His rough head of hair, shaggy eye-brows, pale countenance, and

glassy eyes, afforded a strong contrast to the healthy and innocent face of Susan, as she occasionally looked up anxiously at him. I sat down near them, and Susan went on, probably excited to do so by one of those earnest appeals from her kind protector which she well understood. The chapter she was reading contained an account of the kindness shewn by our blessed Saviour to a miserable object who was helpless and diseased. Dick listened with the utmost attention and earnestness. When Susan had read those compassionate words "Man — thy sins are forgiven thee—" he looked gratefully towards Heaven, and then fixing his eyes on the object of his care and love, he struggled briefly and expired.

It is in the parental character that birds evince their strongest feelings. It is in this capacity that every nerve is exerted, every power employed, every sacrifice cheerfully made.

Mr. SWAINSON.

THE instinctive feelings of alarm which have been implanted in some animals, and which must tend greatly to their preservation, is worthy of notice. Thus if a dog run across a meadow in which cattle are feeding, we see them leave off grazing, and fix their whole attention on the dog. This no doubt arises from that dread of beasts of prey, which cattle partake of in their state of wildness, and which domestication has only partially removed. When a cat runs along the roof of a house, we hear the notes of alarm from swallows, as well as a sort of war-cry, which soon collects a great number of these birds. They may then be seen making a swoop at their enemy, and all but striking it, as they dart past in rapid succession. Young kittens shew an instinctive fear of a dog as soon as they can see; and I have watched the little fry of fish get into shallow water for security at the approach of a pike, or when I have done any thing to excite their fears. Newly-hatched pheasants and partridges will crouch in the grass on hearing a note of *alarm* from the parent birds;

and every one has observed the fear shewn by young chickens and ducks at the sight of a hawk hovering in the air. Nor is this expression of alarm confined to birds and beasts. I have heard it uttered by bees, moths, and some other insects. The wood-louse shews its instinctive fears by rolling itself up into a ball; and other insects will put on the semblance of death when afraid; I have seen a spider do this. Indeed, some insects not only shew their fear, but take extraordinary means of self-preservation.

I now refer to a Spider I recently discovered, and whose proceedings have not, as far as I am aware, been noticed by naturalists. At night I have observed this insect crawling over the ceiling of a room in search of flies, which it eats as it catches them, and appears, unlike most spiders, to have no place of retreat. In the day-time, this spider is motionless at some spot on the ceiling, but it remains in the centre of three fine threads which it has thrown out, one end of each of which has its termination at the place where the spider is resting. On touching one of these threads ever so slightly, the spider instantly disappears. I at first thought that it had suddenly let itself fall to the ground, but after a short time, I saw it in its original position. On disturbing it a second time, I was enabled to ascertain that, by means of its two fore-feet, which alone suspended it

from one of the threads, the insect spun itself round with so much rapidity, as to become perfectly invisible. This lasted for about half a minute, when I again saw the spider hanging on the thread by its two feet. I could not but wonder how this rotatory motion was produced, and continued so rapidly each time I touched one of the threads. After doing this several times, the spider appeared to get weary, and retreated across the ceiling to some distance. The body of the insect was small and round, with rather longer legs than those we commonly find in houses. I have only discovered it in two localities — Hampton Court and East Moulsey; in both of which places I have shewn its spinning faculty to several persons. There can, I think, be no doubt that this power of producing instantaneous concealment must be the means of preserving the spider from becoming a prey to its many enemies, especially as it has no place to which it can retreat as most other spiders have. It has also another peculiarity, which is, that although I have frequently touched, and otherwise molested it, I never could induce it to do what all of its kind will do under similar circumstances — let itself fall to the ground, and then endeavour to escape. It seems to be fully aware that its safety depends on the few fine threads it throws out, and which it evidently leaves with reluctance.

The following fact, also, will serve to prove that fear will produce strange fellowships amongst animals. A friend of mine had a fierce dog, chained to a kennel in his poultry-yard. In the yard there were a number of ducks, who always kept out of the reach of the dog, probably from his having shewn a disposition to kill them. One moonlight night a great commotion was heard in the yard, and the servant-man, on opening his window which looked into it, saw a fox endeavouring to get at the ducks, which had taken refuge in the dog's kennel. The dog protected them with the greatest eagerness, running backwards and forwards as far as his chain would let him, and continued to do so till the fox was driven away.

Numerous instances might be brought forward of birds and quadrupeds in their wild state, coming to man for protection, when their life has been in danger. I remember, a few years ago, going to see some hawking, on a common near Southampton. There was a large assemblage, and many carriages. A white pigeon was let loose, followed by a hawk. After making several circles, the pigeon, finding it could not escape from the hawk, flew into one of the carriages, and took shelter on the bosom of a young lady. It was claimed by the owner of the hawk, and again turned loose, when it came again to the same carriage, and sought protection in the same place. It was

claimed a second time, and, I regret to add, was a third time turned out. On this occasion, the poor bird, probably finding that the place of refuge it had sought would not avail it in its hour of need, fled across the country pursued by the hawk, who struck it down and killed it.

Timid, however, as most animals are and influenced by fear, it is astonishing how strongly affection operates over their greatest apprehension of danger. One of our travellers, I think it was Captain Welstead, mentions, that when he was in Syria, he and some of his party caught some young Gazelles, and having cut their throats, the carcases were suspended from the saddles of the different horsemen. In this situation they were followed the whole of the day by the bereaved and affectionate mothers, who forgot their own danger in their love for their offspring. The gazelle is well known to be one of the most timorous of animals; but here affection preponderated over the strongest impulses of its nature.

Lieutenant Wood, also, in his very interesting account of his journey to discover the source of the river Oxus, mentions the following fact, shewing how strong the affection of animals is for their young under peculiar circumstances. His boat was moored on the shore of the Indus where they disturbed a colony of Otters, which shewed some resentment at the intrusion on their haunts. Two

full-grown young ones were secured and put into a sack. Their cries brought the old otters around the boat during the whole of the night. The next day they ascended the river for at least ten miles; and yet, whenever the young otters made a wailing noise, the otters not only surrounded the boat, but even attempted to get into it. It was difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether the parents had followed the boat that distance, although it is most probable that this was the case. At all events, it shews the sympathy of these animals for those of their species, which were in distress, and their own fearlessness of danger in their endeavours to relieve them.

A Hare is one of the most timid of animals, and yet affection will overcome its fears. A friend of mine, in one of his walks, was attended by his dog, who caught a leveret. The mother, on hearing its cries, came up to the dog, stood close to it on its hind legs, and evidently tried to induce the dog to follow it, and to quit the young one. A person, on whose veracity I can depend, assured me that he had seen a hare beat off a stoat several times that had attacked one of its young. The gardener of a friend of mine, a Suffolk clergyman, once saw a rabbit, that had young, drive a weazel across a field, that had come to its nest, by drumming with its feet on the animal's back.

While on the subject of Stoats, I may mention

the following curious fact, related to me by Mr. G. Nightingale, of Kingston-on-Thames, and which shews the care animals will take, in order to place their young out of the reach of danger.

Riding one day with a party of friends in Richmond Park, he observed a stoat run up an oak tree, and enter a hole in it at a height of about fifteen feet from the ground. Seeing two boys in search of bird's nests near the spot, he persuaded one of them to ascend the tree, and ascertain what was in the hole. On arriving at it, two old stoats bolted from it, and made their escape. After some hesitation, the boy thrust his hand into the hole, and drew out of it a full-grown rabbit, the head only of which had been partly eaten. He then pulled out two young rabbits, each about half-grown, and untouched, and afterwards, nine young stoats. When we consider what a very diminutive animal the stoat is, it is surprising that two of them should have been able to drag a full-grown rabbit to a perpendicular height of fifteen feet.

A large dead branch on the top of one of the old oak trees in the Home Park, Windsor, was recently sawn off. On measuring the height from the ground, it was found to be seventy feet. Some bees had built their waxen cells in the hollow part of the branch, and on removing the honey-combs, a Mouse jumped out from amongst them, having evidently contrived to ascend that distance, in

order to feed on the honey, of which that animal is very fond. By what instinct the mouse was guided to the spot, it is difficult to guess. Mice sometimes commit much havoc in my bee-hives.

Some to the hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some;
Some to the rude protection of the thorn
Commit their feeble offspring.

THOMSON.

It would appear to have escaped the notice of the naturalists, that there are two distinct varieties of Magpies to be found in this country, one of them being considerably smaller than the other. My attention was first called to this fact by an extensive dealer in birds at Windsor; and who appears to know more of their habits, from actual observation, and fondness for them, than any one I have happened to meet with. His success in rearing and taming the nightingale, black-cap, and other tender song birds, is extraordinary. The cuckoo thrives under his care from year to year; and landrails are quite in a state of domestication. His blackbirds, starlings, and thrushes, sing the notes of the nightingale; and his magpies, jays, and jackdaws, talk and whistle far better than any parrots I have yet heard. Much of his time has been passed in the haunts of warblers, for the purpose of capturing singing birds, which he tames with wonderful rapidity. It was from this person

that I received the information of the two varieties of magpies; and from the specimens he has shewn me, there seems to be little doubt of the fact. The smaller pie of the two invariably builds in bushes. Its weight is six ounces; the length from one tip of the wing to the other is nineteen inches; and it is sixteen inches from the end of the beak to that of the tail. It may be called the bush-magpie. The tree-magpie is very considerably larger, weighing very nearly nine ounces, and its plumage is more brilliant than that of the bush-magpie. It is altogether a powerful bird, and when compared with the other variety, the difference is very evident.

Since writing the above, I have ascertained the dimensions of a tree-magpie. Its weight is nine ounces, its breadth twenty-four inches, and its length eighteen inches; thus shewing a very considerable difference both in the weight and dimensions between it and the bush-magpie. The tail, however, of the latter seems longer in proportion than that of the other.

Much has been said respecting the two passages prepared by a magpie in the construction of the nest. I perfectly recollect, when a school-boy, in Leicestershire, in which county the hedges are of a considerable height, and in which numerous magpies' nests were to be found, observing the escape of the bird from the opposite side of the

hole, in which I was about to insert my hand, in order to secure the eggs. This second hole was not much defined, but still it was evident that a place was left, not so strongly woven together as the other parts of the nest; and which was ingeniously contrived, not as a place of entrance, but of escape in a moment of danger. It may be doubted whether the same contrivance is found in the nest of the tree-magpie, which is less exposed to depredation.

The magpie is not only a beautiful, but a very extraordinary bird. A tame one was lately kept in the Cumberland Lodge Gardens, Windsor Great Park, whose great amusement was killing rats and mice, in which he was very successful. This, however, is not the only instance of birds amusing themselves in the same manner. A farmer in Warwickshire informed me, that in taking down one of his oat-ricks, in which were a number of mice, he observed a young cock, which had only its first feathers on, *stock* with his beak (that is strike) the mice as fast as they fell to the ground. He said that he killed them with great rapidity, seldom striking them more than once.

The extreme cunning and shyness of the magpie appears to be owing to the constant persecution it meets with in this country. In Norway it is on the most familiar terms with the inhabitants, hopping about their doors, and sometimes coming

inside their houses. A gentleman informs me, that at Gottenburgh he has seen them in well-frequented streets looking for food as securely as pigeons in this country. They would hop quietly out of the way, or fly a yard or two in order to avoid horses and carts, and then settle again. More than fifty have been seen at a time. This familiarity is owing to the kindness with which they are treated, and which it is to be regretted is not practised in this country. Few things can illustrate the cunning, and I may add sense, of the magpie, more than Sir John Sebright's account of magpie-hawking.

"Nothing," he says, "can be more animating than this sport. It is, in my opinion, far superior to every other kind of hawking. The object of the chase is fully a match for its pursuers,—a requisite absolutely necessary to give an interest to any sport of this kind; and it has the advantage of giving full employment to the company, which is not the case in partridge-hawking. A down, or common, where low trees or thorn-bushes are dispersed at the distance of from thirty to fifty yards apart, is the place best calculated for this diversion. When a magpie is seen at a distance, a hawk is immediately to be cast off. The magpie will take refuge in a bush the moment he sees the falcon, and will remain there until the falconer arrives, with the hawk waiting on in the air. The

magpie is to be driven from its retreat, and the hawk, if at a good pitch, will stoop at him as he passes to another bush, from whence he is to be driven in the same way, another hawk having been previously cast off, so that one or the other may always be so situated as to attack him to advantage. The second hawk is necessary, for the magpie shifts with great cunning and dexterity to avoid the stoop; and when hard pressed, owing to the bushes being rather far apart, will pass under the bellies of the horses, flutter along the cart-ruts, and avail himself of every little inequality of the ground in order to escape. Four or five assistants, besides the falconer, who should attend solely to his hawks, are required for this sport. They should be well mounted, and provided with whips, for the magpie cannot be driven from a bush with a stick; but the crack of a whip will force him to leave it, even when he is so tired as hardly to be able to fly. The magpie will always endeavour to make his way to some strong cover; care must, therefore, be taken to counteract him, and to drive him to that part of the ground where the bushes are farthest from each other. It is not easy to take a magpie in a hedge. Some of the horsemen must be on each side of it; some must ride behind and some before him; for unless compelled to rise by being surrounded on all sides, he will flutter along the

hedge, so as to shelter himself from the stoop of the falcon. Many requisites are necessary to afford this sport in perfection; — a favourable country, good hawks, and able assistants."

When brought up from the nest, the magpie is capable of great attachment to the person who has the care of it; and I have observed this shewn in a variety of ways. It will also attach itself to a dog or cat which may happen to be in a yard with it, but it generally is the master, from the great strength of its beak. At this time (1843) a bird of the same order, the Jackdaw, belonging to a butcher at Sunning Hill, Berkshire, is the inseparable companion of a dog. He can neither stir nor leave the premises, but his faithful and attached friend goes with him; and it is a pleasing sight to see them together, the dog looking at his companion with much complacency, which the daw returns with an appearance of affection not to be misunderstood. It affords a proof that animals seek for some object on which to bestow their affections; and when their natural ones are not to be met with, they select one, however incongruous, for their friend and companion. This fondness for sociability has been beautifully instilled in animals by their benevolent Maker. It must add much to their actual enjoyment of life during the short period of their existence; and, at all events, it affords a useful lesson by inculcating kindly

feelings to each other, and of compassion for all the created objects we see around us.

In Kent, and other parts of England, the sight of a single magpie is considered a bad omen. When this is the case, it is generally a token of cold and boisterous weather, at which time, only one bird makes its appearance. The magpie is not only fond of hiding things, but selects particular localities for that purpose. Two magpies, kept in a very extensive kitchen garden, always hid food they could not eat, and also concealed bones, bits of bread, and even grains of wheat, which they searched for and found amongst the stable manure. One day some men were sent to dig up that part of the garden, which had been the favourite hiding place of the birds. The work had scarcely commenced, when the magpies shewed that they were perfectly aware of what was going forward; and also afforded a proof of the retentiveness of their memory, which was not a little extraordinary. They hastened to the spot, and with their beaks cleared the earth which concealed their hidden treasures, which they conveyed to some distance, returning for the rest. In this way seven or eight bones and pieces of bread were disinterred, although some of them had been buried three or four weeks; thus shewing that they perfectly recollected peculiar spots.

Beneath the branching oaks
One peeping cot sends up, from out the trees,
Its early wreath of slow-ascending smoke.
BOWLES.

It may not be generally known, that some of the Queens of England have been in the habit of choosing a fine and thriving oak or beech tree in Windsor Forest, to which they have given their name; which, with the date of the month and year of the selection, is engraved on a brass plate, and screwed securely on the tree. Thus, in one of the most beautiful and retired parts of the forest, Queen Anne's oak may be seen; the oak of the amiable wife of George II., Queen Caroline; the oak of Queen Charlotte; the oak of the excellent Queen Adelaide; as well as that of her present Majesty: they all have seats around them. The green drives of many miles, along which these trees may be approached, are not only kept in the most perfect order, but at every step we go, either some opening view of the castle, or the surrounding country, presents itself to our notice, or else some picturesque or noble tree attracts attention. Here and there are charming glades, down which a gentle stream of water makes

its way, and which is crossed by a rustic bridge. It is at nearly the end of this drive in one direction, and in the neighbourhood of the trees I have referred to, that one of the prettiest Cottages imaginable opens upon our view.

Nothing can be more smiling and cheerful, or kept in better order, than this abode of the woodman of the district. His rustic seats, his flowers, and neat kitchen garden, interspersed with fruit trees, all give the idea of rural peace and beauty. The oaks and beeches spread out their arms over the well-kept lawn in front of the cottage, while the wood-pigeon and woodpecker are heard in the adjoining thicket.

This sort of cottage is peculiarly English, and is always noticed with pleasure by foreign travellers in our island. A late one* says, "England is described always very justly and always in the same words —'it is all one garden.' There is scarce a cottage between Dover and London (seventy miles) where a poet might not be happy to live. I saw a hundred little spots I coveted with quite a heart-ache." And in the description of his drive from London to this immediate part of the country, he uses these graphic expressions:—"The scenery on the way was truly English—one series of finished landscapes, of every variety of combinations, lawns, fancy cottages, manor-houses, groves, roses and flower gardens, make up England. It surfeits the eye at last.

* Willis.

You could not drop a poet out of the clouds upon any part of it I have seen, where, within five minutes' walk, he would not find himself a paradise." Such language is very pleasing to our English ears, and more especially coming from an American traveller, who had passed more than two years in inspecting, with no inattentive or unknowing eye, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, and France.

I am indebted to an unknown author for the following lines, which prettily descant on our humble habitations, the peculiar features of our rural scenery, and happily paint that particular characteristic of our country, the love of our own untranslatable word, *comfort*.

Beside a lane diverging from a wood,
Where tall tree-tops o'er-roof the grassy way,
A white-washed cot in calm seclusion stood,
And, sloping down to face the southern ray,
Before the door a well-stock'd garden lay;
Clean-weeded beds by winding walks outspread,
Where household roots were ripening day by day,
And blossom'd beans delicious perfume shed,
While fruit-trees, bending low, arch'd closely overhead.

All round the place a look of comfort beam'd,
True English comfort, homely, calm, and sweet!
The very trees, amid their stillness, seem'd
With quiet joy their leafy friends to meet,
And on the roses smil'd beside their feet;
The shaded lane, the soft and balmy air,
The breath of flowers new-waked the morn to greet;
All seem'd so pure, so innocent, and fair,
That in such scenes as these man never need despair.

Along the walks sweet-scented creepers hung,
Tied here and there, their fragile stems to stay;
And after rain the gentle breezes flung
Such floating fragrance far across the way,
As lured the bees from distant fields to stray;
A rustic porch, with straggling woodbine dress'd,
And blooming roses, made the cottage gay;
While near at hand, the plum-tree's welcome guest,
Three summers, undisturb'd, a thrush had built her nest.

In two small plots, with border-box hemm'd round,
Rare healing plants and choicest pot-herbs grew;
The garden-balm, by village dames renown'd;
And fragrant thyme, its rich aroma threw
O'er mint and whiteleav'd sage, and bitter rue.
Not far from these the straw-thatch'd bee-hives stood,
Where in and out, all day, incessant flew
The labouring bees, so bent on public good,
That idlers ne'er disgraced that busy neighbourhood.

The picturesque and noble oak selected by her late Majesty, Queen Charlotte, stands near the woodman's cottage I have been describing, and flourishes on the prettiest lawn imaginable. The perfection of sylvan scenery will be found near this spot, and will amply repay a visit to it.

Perhaps most persons will feel that the interest of scenery is enhanced by its having been viewed, and the locality visited, by those who were eminent for their rank, or distinguished for their talent. This was the case with the situation I have been describing. It was one of the favourite haunts of Pope, and where he probably wrote his early poem of Windsor Forest. It is evident that

he was a great admirer of forest scenery and beautiful trees. He tells us—

Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,
And part admit and part exclude the day;
There interspers'd in lawns and opening glades,
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.

He speaks of "thy trees, fair Windsor," and of the happiness of him—

Who to these shades retires,
Whom nature charms, and whom the muse inspires.

And concludes with the following charming description of his own feelings in these forestal haunts.

My humble muse, in unambitious strains,
Paints the green forest and the flow'ry plains,*
Where Peace descending bids her olives spring,
And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing;
E'en I more sweetly pass my careless days,
Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;
Enough for me, that to the list'ning swains
First in these shades I sung the sylvan strains.

It is impossible to pass along the drives in this part of the forest, without being struck with the many specimens of fine old oaks and beeches growing into each other, so as almost to appear as one tree, thus reminding me of the following lines—

See the tall oak his spreading arms entwines,
And with the beech a mutual shade combines.

* Before the enclosure of the forest, the adjoining plains were covered with the beautiful purple flowers of the heath. Patches of it may still be seen.

Sometimes a little group of thorns or hollies may be seen growing round their trunks, or a patch of fern or fox-glove adds to the scenery. Indeed, my walks and drives in the recesses of woods are always agreeable. All is quiet repose, or nothing but pleasing sounds are heard; and these afford a gratification of no ordinary kind. During the heat of summer there is a delightful shade; and I never think of those charming lines of Virgil —

O quis me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra —

without fancying that they must have been uttered by many a thoughtful moralist, "as he lay along under an oak," beholding "the sobbing deer," and enjoying the shade, while the "brawling brook" glided onward at his feet.

The human mind is, perhaps, in its happiest state of enjoyment when the works of nature are spreading forth their charms for wonder and consideration. No one can feel solitary when so employed, even on the hill's side, or in the deepest recesses of our woodlands.

Sic ego secretis possim bene vivere sylvis
Qua nulla humano sit via trita pede.

HIM they lov'd
Ev'n in his meanest creatures; reverenc'd HIM
In the rook's instinct, and the emmet's craft.

THE more I consider the subject, the more difficult it appears to fix any limit to the faculties of the animal creation. Under peculiar circumstances, animals will frequently evince a degree of sense truly surprising, and also extricate themselves from difficulties and dangers which man, with all his reasoning powers, would never have accomplished. They have perseverance, strong affections, fidelity, and a degree of memory both as to time and persons, which only those who have been in the habit of attending to these faculties in animals, would give them credit for. A few instances may serve to illustrate these remarks.

The late Duke of Hamilton had a favourite Bull Dog, called Dumplin, who was in the habit for some years of accompanying the Duke in his carriage to Hamilton. While he was still very healthy, and far from an old dog, a younger favourite was selected as the companion of the Duke, and Dumplin was left behind. The dog saw his rival get into the carriage and depart, and from that moment he became indifferent to his

food, rejected it, and drooped and pined. The servants, in whose care he was left, sent for a dog-doctor, who, however, was not able to ascertain that anything was the matter with the poor animal. At last he enquired whether any unusual event had occurred, likely to occasion the state in which he found the dog. The servants then related the above circumstance of his not having been allowed to accompany his master as usual. "Oh," exclaimed the doctor, "I can do nothing for him; the creature is broken-hearted, and will die." This appeared to be the case. The poor affectionate animal died very shortly afterwards.

A gentleman, well known for his kindness and benevolence, but whose name I am requested not to mention, was, in conseqnence of his fondness for reading, almost constantly in his library. While residing in London, he was disturbed one day by a Cat coming down the chimney, and jumping upon his knees, as if to claim his protection. The animal was wounded, and had evidently been much ill-treated. It came, however, to find a friend, and found one. The kind-hearted owner of the house allowed the cat to remain in his lap, and soothed it with his voice, while it licked its wounds. A mutual attachment was the consequence. The cat showed her gratitude by following her protector wherever she was able to do so, and was his companion into Italy and various

other countries; and seemed to have lost that fondness for one locality which is so peculiar in these animals. Unlike many favourites, the cat lived to a good old age, evincing her attachment to the last moment of her life.

A friend of mine, who resided much on the continent, had a fine Newfoundland Dog at his country-seat in England. On one of his occasional visits to this place, he was accompanied by a courier, who amused himself with the dog, teaching him to jump over a stick, to fetch logs of wood for the fire, and other tricks. During the absence of the master of the house, the dog was kept chained up in the yard, and the person left in charge of the house was ignorant of the dog's accomplishments. At the end of nearly four years, Mr. S. returned to England, and sent his courier to the house to await his arrival at it. The dog, on hearing the courier's voice, immediately recognized it, and shewed his delight in a manner not to be misunderstood. On being let loose, he began to jump as he had formerly been taught to do; and on the courier's seating himself by the kitchen fire, the dog went into the yard, without any signal whatever having been given, and brought log after log of wood, and deposited them at the feet of his former instructor; thus shewing the retentiveness of his memory after so long a period of time.

A family of my acquaintance, whose strictness

in the observance of the Sunday is carried to a more than usual extent, have three Dogs, which are turned out every morning into the garden, where they frisk and bark about during six days of the week. On the Sunday, however, the case is very different. The dogs are trained to complete silence on that day, of the arrival of which they seem perfectly aware. Not a sound is then heard, or a gambol seen, under an evident consciousness that their usual sports would subject them to reprehension.

A Rat, caught in a trap by the leg, has not only been known to extricate itself by gnawing off the leg; but a well-authenticated fact has been communicated to me, of another rat having been seen endeavouring to extricate his captured companion.

A boy lately got up to a Squirrel's drey, in a tree in Windsor Great Park, and finding the young in it only just born, he left it, intending to come when they were older and secure them. On going to it a second time, he found the drey empty. The old squirrels had taken the alarm, and removed their young to a drey, which they had constructed in a tree at some distance.

A Cow belonging to a friend of mine, was separated from her calf by means of a hurdle-fence, placed across a field. She contrived, however, to place her teats in such a position that the calf was enabled to suck her. When this was discovered,

a strap having spikes on it was put on the calf, and it was then admitted into the same enclosure with the cow. The latter, on finding the spikes hurt her udder, lay down upon her side, and thus the calf was able to suck without any pain to its mother.

In further illustration of the faculties of animals under peculiar circumstances, I may mention the following interesting and well authenticated fact.

The late Earl of Thanet was in the habit of removing, every year, with his hunters and hounds from Hothfield, near Ashford in Kent, to another seat he had in Westmoreland. A short time previous to one of these removals, a Fox had been run to earth near Hothfield; and upon being dug out, he proved to be so extraordinary a large and fine one, that Lord Thanet directed it to be conveyed to Westmoreland. In the course of the next season, a fox was run to earth again at Hothfield, and upon being dug out, the huntsman, whippers-in, and the earth-stoppers, all declared that it was the same fox which had been taken into Westmoreland, as it had an unusually large white blaze on his forehead. Lord Thanet was exceedingly energetic in his expressions of disbelief of the statement of his people, but they persisted in their assertions, and having ear-marked the fox, he was again taken into Westmoreland, and turned loose in the neighbourhood of Appleby Castle.

In hunting the next season at Hothfield, a fox was killed at that place, which proved to be the one in question, and which had thus twice found his way from Westmoreland into Kent. By what instinct or exertions of its faculties the animal was enabled to do this, the distance from one place to the other being about three hundred and twenty miles, it is not easy to form an idea. Its well-known cunning would, one would suppose, be of little avail in such an emergency, except in enabling it to procure food.

Snakes and some other animals, and even insects, will put on a semblance of death, when they find that they have no means left of escaping from their enemies. My Bees have contracted the entrance to their hives, in order to protect them the more readily from depredation. Birds have artfully endeavoured to conceal their nests by a different covering, when they find that their young have been in danger from the discovery of the nest. Eggs have been forsaken after they have been touched, and the nest, after all the labour and art which have been bestowed upon it, abandoned; but however much the young may have been handled, I have never yet known an instance in which fear has overcome affection, and induced the parent birds to abandon their offspring; so powerfully does love pervade the animal creation.

In order justly to estimate the wise arrange-

ments of our benevolent Creator, the mind cannot be too frequently employed in searching into the various facts and circumstances connected with everything we see around us. If we habituated ourselves to this pleasing study, we should discover in His works, a Being full of the tenderest compassion and kindness, incessantly employed in the welfare of His creatures, however mean and insignificant they may appear to us, and evincing His goodness by the very abundance of His benefits. This is a consideration calculated to fill us with gratitude as well as admiration; and these feelings have been well described by one of my favourite poets.

Oh! by yonder mossy seat,
In my hours of sweet retreat,
Might I thus my soul employ,
With sense of gratitude and joy:
Rais'd, as antient prophets were,
In heavenly vision, praise and pray'r;
Pleasing all men, hurting none,
Pleas'd and blest with God alone;
Then while the gardens take my sight,
With all the colours of delight;
While silver waters glide along,
To please my ear, and court my song;
I'll lift my voice and tune my string,
And Thee, great source of nature sing.

PARNELL.

Thy mystic characters I see,
Wrought in each flower, inscribed on every tree;
In ev'ry leaf that trembles to the breeze
I hear the voice of God among the trees.
With thee in shady solitudes I walk,
With thee in busy crowded cities talk;
In every creature own thy forming power,
In each event thy providence adore.

MRS. BARBAULD.

In surveying the wide, extended range of created objects, it is impossible not to be struck with the peculiar care which an all-wise Creator has bestowed upon all his creatures. There is no reptile however loathsome, no bird however feeble, no insect however insignificant, for whose well being provision has not been made in some way or other. Foxes shelter themselves in holes, and have peculiar instincts implanted in them, the birds of the air have nests, and insects are taught to make or spin their habitations. Plants are watered with the dews and rains of heaven, and the little modest flowret of the desert is not neglected by its maker. The glorious sun shines upon all alike, and the beauteous moon is seen in the magnificent vault of Heaven, not only "an ornament in the high places of the Lord," but

dispelling the nocturnal gloom, and cheering all nature with her refulgence. While we reflect on these things, let us remember that the Great Creator of all we see, and of all we enjoy — the compassionate Saviour of the world, went about doing good, yet had no place where he could lay his head. If our minds were disposed as they ought, to reflect on this astonishing fact, to consider, the sufferings, want, fatigue and privations of Him by whose command all things were made, we may well be lost in astonishment at the stupendous love and mercy shewn to us. There may be an affectation of ignorance and indifference in some, and doubts may be raised where none ought to exist. An inward monitor has been implanted in the breast of every one that assures him, not only that there is a future state of existence, but that he is an accountable being, and accountable to that Saviour who died for him. Health, prosperity, youth, high spirits, and, above all, the pride of our hearts, may keep away reflection for a time, but when disease, adversity, old age, and melancholy have the ascendancy, the mind is tortured with painful doubts, fears to scrutinize its awful responsibility, and shrinks from a task which has been neglected and has therefore become dreadful. The cheerful grasshopper of the field, the faithful dog that frisks around us, the soaring and singing lark, then

seem to partake of a happiness which is denied to one who has lived to please himself, unmindful of that Great Being, who created and who died for him.

If the works of creation were more generally studied than they are, we should find the most ample proofs not only of a power which the human mind, with all its extraordinary faculties, is incapable of sufficiently comprehending, but also of unextinguishable and overflowing love. What can be a greater proof of power than the heavens above us, or the organization of the earth. We see the vast expanse of the waters of the ocean, the ever-flowing rivers, the hills and mountains, and the whole world teeming with created objects, and are sensible that they must all have been made by unerring wisdom and omnipotence. A contemplation of this stupendous power might well fill us with wonder and fear, if we were not at the same time sensible of the compassion and love, which are so freely offered, and are within the reach of every one who sincerely applies for them. They are shewn in those tender and beautiful expostulations so frequently to be met with in the bible. We see them in the injunctions promulgated, not to muzzle the mouth of the working ox, or to suffer the laden ass to remain under his burthen. The hungry birds are fed by Him, and even the hairs on the heads of his faith-

ful followers are all numbered. But the grand, the important instance of love was reserved for that moment when the Creator, as well as the Saviour of the world, died on the cross to save his ungrateful creatures from everlasting death. This wonderful love is to be acknowledged by believing in our merciful Redeemer, and by following those precepts which he laid down as the rules for our conduct. Amongst these is that of shewing kindness, not only to each other, but mercy and kindness to the works of His hand. A good man will not wantonly ill use or hurt any creature however insignificant. We may use, but not abuse them.*

* A friend observes, that this is touching on the edge of a difficult question, as to the power given to us over the animal creation. May we destroy noxious and destructive animals? It is answered *certainly?* but may we destroy them when not noxious or injurious to us? May we seek the lion in the solitude of the Lybian Desert, or the tiger in the recesses of the Indian jungle? May we kill animals for *sport?* May we go to their haunts purposely to destroy them, when they have not intruded on us? If Paley's argument is correct in one point of view, that though we preserve animals only for the sake of destroying them, as game, fish, &c. yet by increasing their numbers, the aggregate amount of their happiness is also increased, not to mention the pleasure derived by them from the ample nourishment they receive when under our protection; still it does not touch on the other point, how far our own feelings may be affected by this habitual exercise of our power, pushed to its utmost allowable limit. The author says, "We may use, but not abuse the animal creation," but it is only a small part of them, that being domesticated, it is in our power to *use*; what then is the law, as regards that larger portion not subject to our power,

There is, after all, no study so delightful, no subject so noble, as that of the contemplation of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. While it fills us with humility at our own insignificance, it reveals to us so much care and concern for our happiness, so much power, blended with the tenderest mercy, so much unfailing kindness and forbearance, that the heart of every man must be impenetrable to grateful feelings, which does not acknowledge the obligations conferred upon him by his Maker, and endeavour to offer up some little tribute of love for all he has received. We may study to be happy ourselves, but we must at the same time study to make those happy around us. We must shew our gratitude for the blessings we have received, by kindness, good-will and

nor submitting to our will. Again, the limits separatnig use and abuse are so close, as to be in constant danger to be confounded. Are not racing, fox-hunting, where horses often die of exhaustion, to be ranked among instances of abuse? if not, by what stronger mark is it to be known? The anatomist says, he *uses* the living animal for due purposes, when he dissects it. The man of humanity replies, that he *abuses* his power. Which of the two is right? Many persons argue, that we have no right to keep animals in confinement, as wild beasts in dens, and birds in cages. The ladies in Holland go a step further, and put out the eyes of the canary birds, to make them sing the better; but they do not consider even this to be an *abuse* of their power. On the subject of *field sports*, the correspondence between Mr. G. Wakefield and Mr. Fox may be consulted, in which the subject is discussed with equally good temper by the scholar and the sportsman.

charity to others, and by endeavouring to soften "those ills of life," to which so many of our fellow-creatures are subjected. If this principle were more acted upon, if we followed the precepts of our blessed Saviour, our practice would be that of Christians, and our conduct that of gentlemen. Pride, that greatest of all stumbling-blocks, would be replaced by humility, and religious indifference by that faith, which has been beautifully said, "gives to reason the wing and the eye of the eagle, enabling her to soar towards the heavens, and to look upwards to the Sun of righteousness."

Sweet Spring, thou turn'st, with all thy goodly train,
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with flowers!
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their showers.

DRUMMOND.

Of all the smiling seasons of the year, that of the joyous Spring delights me most. Everything is bursting into freshness, new life and beauty. We have had a May-day which began with a golden shower, after a period of cold dry weather. All nature teemed in an instant with verdure. The air was soft and balmy, and everything looked smiling and cheerful.

O, nature! holy, meek, and mild,
Thou dweller on the mountain wild;
Thou haunter of the lonesome wood,
Thou wanderer by the secret flood;
Thou lover of the daisied sod,
Where Spring's white foot hath lately trod;
Oh! lead me forth o'er dales and meads,
E'en as her child the mother leads;
And while we saunter, let thy speech
God's glory and his goodness preach.*

These are the sort of aspirations, which a lover of nature is constantly breathing, as he looks

* A. CUNNINGHAM.

around him. His heart expands as he views the many gifts bestowed upon man, some for his use, others for his gratification. If he walks in a shady grove at this season of the year, he is ready to exclaim —

Here softest beauties open to my view:
Here many a flow'r expands its blushing charms;
Here the thick foliage wears a greener hue,
And lofty trees extend their leafy arms:
All things conspire to deck the milder scene,
And nature's gentlest form here smiles serene.

Each feather'd songster here with chauntings gay,
Full sweetly wakes the 'incense breathing morn,'
And here the nightingale, with warbling lay,
Full sweetly hails the evening's lov'd return.
That heart whom this soft music cannot move,
Is deaf to pity, and is dead to love.

The music of the grove is, indeed, one of the greatest charms of a walk through some open glade, or shady coppice, during a smiling day in Spring, when the birds, as our good father, Izaak Walton, remarks, "seem to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow-tree." Here, one of my favourite birds, the speckled Thrush, may be heard.

Sweet thrush! whose wild untutor'd strain
Salutes the opening year,
Renew those melting notes again,
And sooth my ravish'd ear.

While evening spreads her shadowy veil,
With pensive steps I'll stray,
And soft on tiptoe gently steal
Beneath thy favourite spray.*

I have quoted these pretty lines, because they were evidently written by one who could fully appreciate the charms of nature. Nor is this the only female poet who has celebrated the songs of birds. The Sky-lark has had many admirers, and its grateful notes, ascending as they appear to do to the very heavens, in order to celebrate the praises of its Maker, have been sung by poets in all ages.

The sky-lark * * * * like a guest
Singing to other spheres, is lost in light,
Till, fondly lured, she turns her faithful breast
Downward through fields of blue. The warbling strain
Near and more near she swells; then hushed again,
Falls like a shadow from the sunny dome.†

Waller, also, gives a pretty description of the lark rising upon the wing on a sunny day.

The lark that shuns on lofty boughs to build
Her humble nest, lies silent in the field;
But if the promise of a cloudless day,
Aurora, smiling, bids her rise and play,
Singing, she mounts; her airy wings are stretched
Towards heaven, as if from heaven her notes she fetched.

Nor should the following affecting lines of Henry Kirke White be omitted, in which he contrasts

* Miss Hord. † Mrs. Conder.

the joyousness of the "sprightly lark" with his own hopeless condition.

Yon brook will glide as softly as before,
Yon landscape smile, yon golden harvest glow,
Yon sprightly lark on mountain wings will soar,
When Henry's name is heard no more below.

Among these quotations from poets who have celebrated the songs of birds, the following sonnet, by Milton, on the Nightingale, is peculiarly beautiful.

O nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray,
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eve of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

In enumerating the list of birds which have been noticed by our poets, the Wood-lark should not be omitted. It is one of our sweetest songsters.

The Thrush
And *wood-lark*, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes.*

* THOMSON.

Our poet of nature then notices the following birds—

The black-bird whistles from the thorny brake:
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
Innum'rous songsters, in the fresh'ning shade
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous.

He then adds—

The stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.

The following lines, by Mr. Roscoe, have always struck me as particularly pleasing.

I love to see at early morn,
The squirrel sit before my door,
There crack his nuts, and hide his shells,
And leap away to seek for more.

I love in hedge-row paths, to see
The linnets hop from spray to spray;
Or mark, at evening's balmy close,
The red-breast hop across my way.

For sure, when nature's free-born train
Approach, with song and gambol here,
Some secret impulse bids them feel
The foot-steps of a friend are near.

Charlotte Smith's ode to Spring may not be generally known;—

Again the wood, and long withdrawing vale,
In many a tint of tender green are drest.

Where the young leaves unfolding, scarce conceal
Beneath their early shade the half-formed nest
Of finch or wood-lark; and the primrose pale,
And lavish cowslip, wildly scatter'd round,
Give their sweet spirits to the sighing gale.
Ah, season of delight — thy prospect fair,
Thy sounds of harmony, thy balmy air,
Have power to cure all sadness — but despair.

Her sonnet also on the departure of the Nightingale is full of beauty and feeling.

Sweet poet of the woods — a long adieu!
Farewell, soft minstrel of the early year!
Ah! 'twill be long ere thou shalt sing anew,
And pour thy music on the night's dull ear.
Whether on Spring thy wandering flights await,
Or whether silent in our groves you dwell,
The pensive muse shall own thee for her mate,
And still protect the song she loves so well.
With cautious step the love-lorn youth shall glide
Through the lone brake that shades thy mossy nest,
And shepherd girls from eyes profane shall hide
The gentle bird, who sings of pity best;
For still thy voice shall soft affections move,
And still be dear to sorrow and to love.

Nor were our early poets indifferent to the charms of Spring and the song of birds. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, has thus described both.

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale:
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her mate hath told her tale:

Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
The fishes flete with new-repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she slings;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale;
The busy bee her honey now she wings;
Winter is worn that was the flower's bale;
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

The Earl of Surrey, who was a warrior, as well as a poet and philosopher, must also have been a close observer of Nature. The fact which he notices of the buck getting rid of his winter coat among the brakes, is well known to those who are acquainted with the habits of deer. In the Spring, small bunches of hair may be seen sticking to bramble bushes and thorns, when they serve for many of our pretty warblers and other birds to line their nests with, or to be mixed up with mosses and other materials to form the nest itself, so careful is Nature, in providing for her offspring.

The following is an extract from the sonnets of Thomas Watson, who wrote the "Tears of Fancie," 1593.

When May is in her prime and youthful Spring
Doth clothe the tree with leaves, and ground with flowers,
And time of year reviveth every thing,
And lovely Nature smiles, and nothing lours;
There Philomela most doth strain her breast
With night complaints, and sits in little rest.

I also give an extract from that charming poet, Michael Drayton.

Clear Anker, on whose silver sanded shore,
My soul-shrin'd saint, my fair idea, lies;
O blessed brook, whose milk-white swans adore
That crystal stream refined by her eyes;
Where sweet myrrh-breathing Zephyr in the Spring
Gently distils his nectar-dropping showers,
Where Nightingales in Arden sit and sing
Amongst the dainty dew-impearled flowers;
Say thus, fair brook, when shalt thou see thy queen?

Nor must Edmund Spencer be omitted. His beautiful description of the garden of Adonis is well known.

There is continual Spring and harvest there,
Continual, both meeting at one time;
For both the boughs do laughing blossoms bear,
And with fresh colours deck the wanton prime,
And eke at once the heavy trees they climb,
Which seem to labour under their fruits load:
The whiles the joyous birds make their pastime
Amongst the shady leaves, their sweet abode,
And their true loves without suspicion tell abroad.

In making a selection from our own Shakspeare, it is difficult, where there are so many beauties, to know what to fix upon. The following sonnet cannot, however, but be pleasing to every one, and it contains a delightful description of the opening Spring.

From you have I been absent in the Spring
When proud-pied April, dressed in all its trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any Summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

We have also his beautiful allusion to the Lark in another of his sonnets.

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
* * * *
Haply I think on thee, — and then my state
(Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings,
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

There are, however, few old genuine English poets, whose merits are more generally acknowledged by competent judges than those of Robert Herrick. The beauties of his poetry have sustained the test of time, and it has been said of it that "it was the offspring of genius, not of cultivation." The following extract, from his lines to Corinna on the first of May, is peculiarly pleasing.

Get up, get up for shame, the blooming morne
Upon her wings presents the god unshorne.
See how Aurora throwes her faire
Fresh quilted colours through the aire;
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herbe and tree,
Each flower has wept, and bow'd toward the east,
Above an houre since, yet you not drest,
Nay! not so much as out of bed
When all the birds have mattens seyd,
And sung their thankfull hymns; 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation to keep in,
When as a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

Rise, and put on your foliage, and be seene
To come forth, like the Spring-time, fresh and greene,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gowne or haire;
Feare not, the leaves will strew
Gemms in abundance upon you;
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept.
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night;
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himselfe, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dresse, be briefe in praying;
Few beads are best, when once we go a Maying.

I am sure that I shall be excused for introducing the following pretty lines to "Primroses filled with morning-dew."

Why doe ye weep sweet babes? can teares
Speak griefe in you,

Who were but borne
Just as the modest morne
Teem'd her refreshing dew?
Alas, you have not known that shower,
That marres a flower,
Nor felt th' unkind
Breath of a blasting wind,
Nor are ye worne with yeares;
Or warpt, as we,
Who think it strange to see,
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
To speak by teares before ye have a tongue.

Speak, whimp'ring younglings, and make known
The reason why
Ye droop and weep,
Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullabie?
Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kisse
From that sweet-heart to this?
No, no, this sorrow shown
By your teares shed
Wo'd have this lecture read
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with teares brought forth.

My garden takes up half my daily care.
And my field asks the minutes I can spare.

HARTE.

ADDISON remarked, that he considered the pleasure we take in a garden, as one of the most innocent delights in human life. Evelyn, also, said that the happiness of a person fond of his garden was preferable to what was founded on all other enjoyments. Cowley evidently was of the same opinion, for he exclaims —

Blest be the man (and blest he is) whome'er
Plac'd far out of the roads of hope and fear
A little field, and little garden, feeds:
The field gives all that frugal nature needs;
The wealthy garden liberally bestows
All she can ask ——

Milton, also, described the delights of a garden in the most eloquent language; and although he was unable to see what he so beautifully pourtrayed, yet his intellectual eye, his fine imagination, and his correct taste, enabled him not only to reject factitious ornaments, and artificial conceits, but to give the following beautiful description of a garden, made by the hand of Nature herself —

From that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendant shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noon-tide bowers. Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view.

Sir William Temple, in his Essay on Gardening, has the following passage. "If we believe the Scriptures," he observes, "we must allow that God Almighty esteemed the life of a man in a garden the happiest he could give him, or else he would not have placed Adam in that of Eden; it was the state of innocence and pleasure, and the life of husbandry and cities came after the fall, with guilt and labour."

It is impossible, also, to read Pope's works, and not to be aware of the great delight he took in his garden, or not to perceive that he had imbibed some taste for ornamental gardening. The description of his grotto, in his letter to Mr. Blount (1725) is altogether charming. Alas! to see his garden now, divided and sub-divided — his walks covered with weeds — the urn he erected to the memory of his mother, with its affecting inscription, scrawled upon and defaced — and his grotto, his charming and interesting grotto, where he

"found a spring* of the clearest water, which fell in a perpetual rill, that echoed through the cavern night and day," and from which, "looking down through a sloping arcade of trees, the sails on the river might be seen passing suddenly and vanishing," is now mutilated and pillaged of its shells, flints, and "simple pebbles." In addition to this devastation, how much is it to be regretted that so soon after his death his garden should have been spoilt by bad taste. When Lord Nugent wrote those well-known lines to Sir William Stanhope, on his enlargements and *improvements* of Pope's grounds, which I cannot but consider as equally sycophantic and ignorant —

> But fancy now displays a fairer scope,
> And Stanhope's plans unfold the soul of Pope,

we should rather read —

> And Stanhope's wealth destroys the taste of Pope.

Would that his villa, his garden, and his grotto, had fallen into the hands of one who would have duly appreciated them — of one who would have kept up and cherished what others have so wantonly destroyed or altered. That *one* is the author of the Pleasures of Memory, who not only possesses much of the genius of Pope, and all his

* This spring, which had disappeared for many years, and indeed was quite forgotten, suddenly burst out last Summer, and again has become the ornament of the grotto. J. MITFORD, 1843.

taste, but who has the greatest veneration for everything which belonged to that immortal poet.

Horace Walpole formed a just estimate of Sir William Stanhope's bad taste, and grieved over the alterations he had made, and the sort of sacrilege he had committed. In one of his letters, he says, "I must tell you a private woe that has happened to me in my neighbourhood. Sir William Stanhope bought Pope's house and garden. The former was so small and bad, one could not avoid pardoning his hollowing out that fragment of the rock Parnassus into habitable chambers; but would you believe it, he has cut down the sacred groves themselves! In short, it was a little bit of ground of five acres, enclosed with three lanes, and seeing nothing. Pope had twisted and twirled, and rhymed and harmonized this, till it appeared two or three sweet little lawns opening and opening beyond one another, and the whole surrounded with thick impenetrable woods. Sir William, by advice of his son-in-law, Mr. Ellis, has hacked and hewed these groves, wriggled a winding gravel-walk through them with an edging of shrubs, in what they call the modern taste, and, in short, desired the three lanes to walk in again, and now is forced to shut them out again by a wall, for there was not a muse could walk there, but she was spied by every country fellow that went by with a pipe in his mouth."

When Lord Bolingbroke, after a residence of four years in France, returned on account of the state of his affairs to England, in order to sell his farm at Dawley, he principally resided with Pope at Twickenham, in the society of Marchmont, Wyndham, and other friends. It is probably on this occasion, that Pope composed those beautiful lines "On his Grotto at Twickenham," which have conferred an undying interest on it.

Approach, but awful! lo! the Ægerian grot,
Where, nobly pensive, St. John sat and thought;
Where British sighs from dying Wyndham stole,
And the bright flame was shot through Marchmont's soul.
Let such, such only, tread this sacred floor,
Who dare to love their country, and be poor.

The love of gardens and of gardening appears to be almost exclusively confined to the English, and is partaken of by the poor as well as by the rich. Nothing can be prettier than the gardens attached to the thatched cottages in Devonshire. They are frequently to be seen on the side, and oftener at the bottom of a hill, down which a narrow road leads to a rude single-arched stone bridge. Here a shallow stream may be seen flowing rapidly, and which now and then *stickles*, to use a Devonshire phrase, over a pavement of either pebbles or ragstone. A little rill descends by the side of the lane, and close to the hedge of

the cottage, which is approached by a broad stepping stone over the rill, and beyond it is a gate made of sticks, which leads to the cottage. At a short distance, an excavation has been cut out of the bank, and paved round with rough stones, into which the water finds, and then again makes its way, clear and sparkling. This is the cottager's well. His garden is gay with flowers. His bees are placed on each side of a window surrounded with honeysuckles, jessamine, or a flourishing vine, and the rustic porch is covered with these or other creepers. 'Here, also, the gorgeous hollyhock may be seen in perfection, for it delights in the rich red soil of Devonshire. Giant-stocks, carnations, and china-asters flourish from the same cause; and make the garden appear as though it belonged to Flora herself.

Nor must the little orchard be forgotten. The apple trees slope with the hill, and in the Spring are covered with a profusion of the most beautiful blossom, and in the Autumn are generally weighed down with their load of red fruit. Under them may be seen a crop of potatoes, and in another part of the garden those fine Paington cabbages, one of the best vegetables of the county. In a sheltered nook is the thatched pig-sty, partly concealed by the round yellow-faced sunflower, which serves both as a screen and as an ornament. The mud or *cob* walls of the cottage, add to its pic-

turesque appearance, when partly covered with creepers, and surrounded with flowers.

Such is an accurate description of one of the many cottages I have seen in the beautiful and hospitable county of Devon, so celebrated for its illustrious men, and the beauty of its women. Those who, like myself, have wandered amongst its delightful lanes, will not think my picture overcharged.

But I must introduce my reader to the inside of a Devonshire cottage. On entering it, he will see the polished dresser glittering with bright pewter plates; the flitch of bacon on the rack, with paper bags stored with dried pot-herbs, for winter use, deposited near it; the bright dog-bars, instead of a grate, with the *cottrel* over them, to hang the pot on, and everything bespeaking comfort and cleanliness. The cottager's wife will ask him to sit down, in that hearty Devonshire phrase, which has often been addressed to me, and which I always delighted in — "Do'y, Sir, pitch yourself," bringing forward a chair, at the same time, and wiping it down with her apron. A cup of cyder will be offered, or bread and cheese, or whatever the cottage affords.

I have known one of the children stealthily sent to a neighbouring farmer's, for a little clotted cream, which has been set before me with a loaf of brown bread, and with the most hearty good

will. They are so delicious a banquet, that Pope might have thought of it when he said —

> Beneath the humble cottage let us haste,
> And there, unenvied, rural dainties taste.

I have dwelt longer than I intended on the cottage scenery of Devonshire, because I think it stands pre-eminent in this country for beauty; and because I regard its peasantry as affording the best examples I have met with of unaffected kindness, civility, industry, and good conduct.

I have, on more than one occasion, expressed my admiration of the agricultural population of England; and I trust that the time is not far distant, when each individual amongst them will have an allotment of land, at a fair rent, for the better maintenance of themselves and their families, not in common fields, but attached to their houses.

The taste for gardens, however, is not confined to the rural districts. Round the town of Birmingham, for instance, there are some hundreds of small gardens, which are diligently cultivated by the working classes. Each garden has a little covered seat, where the owner enjoys his glass of ale, and smokes his pipe, at the close of the evening; and here the finest auriculas, polyanthuses, carnations, &c. are to be met with. They are cultivated with the utmost skill and care, and may vie with any produced in this country. I have

also been informed that our Spitalfields weavers have the same fondness for flowers, and are also amongst our best collectors of insects. In some other districts, tulips are successfully cultivated, and in others the ranunculus and anemone. One man is celebrated for his fine stocks, another for his pansies, while a third will produce unrivalled gooseberries for size, or wall-flowers of the darkest hue. I am assured, that great and deplorable as the distress now is at Birmingham, a man would sell his clothes, his furniture, indeed all that he possessed, sooner than part with his beloved garden.

Flowers are cultivated to a considerable extent, and with great success, in the neighbourhood of London, and especially in some parts of Surrey, in which county there are many exhibitions of flowers every year. Here the rich and poor may be seen assembled together, each either admiring or criticising particular blooms, and the poor man appearing perfectly competent to appreciate their peculiar merits. It always affords me pleasure to witness these meetings, and to watch the gleam of satisfaction in the countenance of some cottager, when

> his garden's gem
> The heartsease

has been praised, or his well-cultivated shew of potatoes or apples has obtained for him some trifling prize.

Persons of influence, residing in the country, should do their utmost to encourage the cultivation not only of flowers, but of vegetables and bees, amongst their poorer neighbours. It not only tends to keep them out of ale and beer-houses, those curses of the labouring man in this country, but improves their minds, their habits, and health. An amiable florist has observed, that the love of flowers is one of the earliest impressions, which the dawning of reason implants in the human mind; and that happy are the parents of children in whose imaginations this desirable predilection is early evinced. It inculcates a salutary habit of reasoning and thinking on subjects worthy of exercising the thoughts, and is calculated to improve them. It gradually trains the mind to the study and observance of that most instructive volume, the Book of Nature. The passion for flowers is, indeed, one of the most enduring and permanent of all enjoyments. At the coming of each revolving Spring, we anxiously return to our loved and favourite pursuit. With joy and delight we perceive that

Ethereal mildness is come,

and that the glory of reviving nature is returned.

In Pliny's description of his beautiful garden in Tuscany, how readily we trace the happiness and contentment he found in following the intellectual pursuit he so much delighted in. He says, "I here

enjoy a more profound retirement. All is calm and composed, and this contributes, no less than the clear air and unclouded sky, to that health of body and cheerfulness of mind, which I particularly enjoy here."

Horace, also, expressed his desire of possessing a garden, and a small portion of ground.

> Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus;
> Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons,
> Et paulum silvæ super his foret.

It would be endless to attempt an enumeration of the many celebrated men of our own country who have taken pleasure in the cultivation of a garden. I will, therefore, only refer to a few.

Those who have been at Dropmore, will have seen a proof of the fine taste of the late Lord Grenville, who converted an almost barren heath into one of the most charming gardens and pleasure grounds imaginable. Here Deodara cedars, araucarias, and many rare and beautiful pines, may be seen in great perfection, and a great variety of curious plants. Every opportunity was taken of preserving in the demesne the wilder beauties of the situation; the woods and plantations flourished under the immediate hands and pruning hook of the Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, while the Flower Gardens plainly told what of their great beauty they owed to the guiding care and judgment of their noble mistress.

A friend of mine, upon viewing the grounds on fine summer day, in 1840, gave expression to his feelings in the following lines —

Long midst thy groves, fair DROPMORE, could I stray,
For you are fair, indeed — from the bare heath
You sprung by magic of his classic mind —
And owe your landscape to a GRENVILLE's skill.
Yes! you were grateful, — solace sweet you gave
To temples aching for his country's weal, —
To nerves all wearied with the constant strife
Of angry senates, in tumultuous times.
Your groves have soothed him with their umbrage cool,
Your laughing lawns have spread their greensward soft
To tempt his steps, strolling in converse sweet
With kindred souls, co-equal in their lore,
And striving each for England's happiness.
Yes, — you were grateful, — here in peace he dwelt,
Rich in connubial and fraternal love.
DROPMORE! those hands yet tend with pious care
Your charms, and as he left them, still they glow,
While riper beauty consummates his plan.

Mr. Fox delighted in planting and ornamenting St. Anne's Hill, where masses of some of the finest rhododendrons and azalias in England may be seen, and where the effects of his good taste are very conspicuous. Burke and Warren Hastings passed their most tranquil, and, perhaps, happiest days, in laying out and improving their gardens at Hallbarn and Daylesford; and Mr. Pitt had equal pleasure at Holwood. The late Marquess Wellesley shewed his fondness for flowers almost

to the last moment of his life. The conservatory of that great stateman at Kingston House was a blaze of beauty, even in Winter; and not a long time before he died, he mentioned to me the great delight it afforded him.

The celebrated St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, was also a lover of gardens. When he resided on his beautiful estate, called La Source, near Orleans, the taste he shewed in its adornment is said to have been exquisite. He calls it "his Hermitage;" and in mentioning the small river Loiret, which has its source near his residence, he says, "I have, in my wood, the biggest and clearest spring in Europe, which forms, before it leaves the park, a more beautiful river than any which flows in Greek or Latin verse." Like Shenstone, he placed inscriptions in his grounds. When he resided at Dawley, Pope, in one of his letters to Swift, says, "I now hold the pen for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter between two hay-cocks; but his attention is somewhat diverted by casting his eyes on the clouds, not in admiration of what you say, but for fear of a shower. As to the return of his health and vigour, were you here, you might enquire of his hay-makers; but as to his temperance, I can answer, that for one whole day we have had nothing for dinner but mutton broth, beans and bacon, and a barn-door fowl. Now his Lordship has run after his cart, and I have a mo-

ment to tell you that I overheard him agree with a painter, to paint his hall with rakes, spades, prongs, and other ornaments, to countenance his calling this place a farm."

Horace Walpole, in his letters, frequently speaks of his garden, and of the pleasure it afforded him, especially in the lilac and laburnum season. He says, in one of them, "My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress, and talk very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce, run to seed, overturns all my botany, as I have more than once, taken it for a curious West-Indian flowering shrub." In another letter, he thus mentions his favourite pursuit to his friend, Mr. Montague, "I can furnish you with a few plants, particularly three Chinese arbor-vitæs, a dozen of the New England pines,* that beautiful tree that we have so much admired at the Duke of Argyle's, for its clear, straight stem, the lightness of its hairy green, and for being feathered quite to the ground. * * There is another bit of picture of which I am fond, and that is a larch or spruce fir, planted behind a weeping willow, and shooting upwards as the willow depends."

Shenstone talks with enthusiasm of his flowers, his newly-cleared walks, of the delight he took in

* What pine is this, which Walpole calls New England. Quære Weymouth, J. M.

watering his carnations, and of his little walks to see a shrub or a flower upon the point of blossoming. He mentions the delights of his hay-harvest, when the activity of country-people is seen in a pleasing employment, and when pinks, woodbines and jasmines, are in their prime. Few things, he adds, afford him so much pleasure at that time, as lolling on a bank in the very heat of the sun. His neighbour, Lord Littleton, ornamented Hagley in the happiest manner; and the beautiful scenery will not readily be obliterated from the minds of those who have seen it.

It is, however, only amongst gentlemen of independent fortunes in this country, devoted to horticultural pursuits, that we must seek for gardens and conservatories stored with the choicest plants and flowers.

A few years ago, the only eminent landscape-gardener at that time in France, brought me a letter of introduction. His chief object was to see the gardens of private individuals, of which he said he had heard so much. I took him to several; and his astonishment at seeing the well-kept gardens, the rare plants in them, and the verdant lawns, was unbounded. He was constantly exclaiming, "Votre gazon! nous n'avons pas de gazon en France." He wondered at the expense the English went to in having their lawns so constantly mown, and at the appearance of comfort and luxury which he

witnessed at the residence of a country gentleman. Nor were our cottage gardens overlooked by him. He had evidently seen nothing like them; and confessed that the fondness of the English of all classes for flowers must be unbounded: and so it is. It is one of the characteristics of our country, and long may it remain so.

In ev'ry scene thy hands have dress'd,
In ev'ry form by thee impress'd,
In ev'ry note that swells the gale,
Or tuneful stream that cheers the vale,
A voice is heard of praise and love,

Miss Williams.

There are many facts in the economy of nature which are truly surprising, and which serve to prove with what tenderness, care, and wisdom everything has been either created or regulated. An instance of this may be shewn with respect to the nests of some of those birds which build on slender branches of trees, or amongst reeds and rushes, where their nests would be liable to be much blown about and shaken. In this case the birds have had a peculiar instinct implanted in them of bending in, or rather of making a sort of rim round the upper part of the nest. But for this foresight and peculiar architecture, it is evident that the eggs would roll out of the nest when the branches were much agitated in high winds. This apparently trifling fact shews how beautifully and delightfully Almighty God has attended to the well-being of His creatures. Nothing has been overlooked. Even in the structure of its

nest, the little bird has been taught to make it of the size exactly necessary to contain the future young, and to line it, as the case may require, either with the warmest feathers, or with hair or cobwebs. The small fan-tailed fly-catcher of Australia makes its elegant little nest on the slender stalk of a tree. It resembles a wine glass in shape, without the bottom part, and the stem is fastened to a lower stalk, thus preserving a due balance. It is outwardly matted together with the webs of spiders, which not only serve to envelope the nest, but are also employed to strengthen its attachment to the branch on which it is constructed. The whole is woven together with exquisite skill. This also is the case with some of the nests of the humming-bird, where the use of the rim is very apparent.

If writers on natural history, who make their remarks on animals as they see them in a state of captivity, could watch them in their native haunts, much that has been said of them would have been omitted. In some instances the wisdom of the Great Creator has been called in question, as if everything that He had made was not perfect, and afforded proofs of infinite wisdom. Buffon, and some other naturalists have described the Sloth, for instance, as an unhappy, miserable animal, almost incapable of crawling on the earth, shedding tears instead of defending itself, and so imperfectly

formed as to require two days to enable it to ascend a tree. But what a different account do those give of it, who have seen it in the localities to which it has been assigned by Providence. Instead of being the helpless animal that has been described, it is, on the contrary, wonderfully adapted from its formation and habits for the mode of life it was destined to lead. Nor are we to suppose that this animal has not his full share of enjoyment, as compared with that of other quadrupeds. The sloth may be called a *tree* animal, with quite as much propriety as the horse or cow may be called *terrestrial* animals. When this fact is known, and the anatomy of the sloth examined with reference to it, we shall find that nothing can be more perfect than its organization. It lives on trees, and dies on trees, nor is it necessary to descend them to procure water, as it does not require any. Its legs are extremely muscular, and are perfectly capable of supporting the weight of the animal. In suspending itself from branches of trees, all the four legs are used, and this is evidently its natural position. In moving from tree to tree, also, the body always hangs downwards. When in search of food, or of its own species, the sloth can shew considerable activity. So careful has Providence been of the preservation of this harmless, and apparently defenceless animal, that its fur is of the same colour

as the moss on the trees on which it lives. This circumstance must render it difficult to be seen in the dense forests which it inhabits.

Nor is this a solitary instance of the peculiar care of a benevolent Creator for His creatures. When birds have been found on little rocky islands, where no fresh water whatever is to be met with, the bills of the birds are all strong, enabling them to squeeze the juice from berries into the mouths of their young, and thus to supply the want of water. If we examine and enquire into the recent discoveries of plants and animals in Australia, we shall find much that is new to us, but all beautifully organized and arranged, and affording proofs of the inexhaustible power of Almighty God. These discoveries are bursting upon us day after day, surprising us with wonder at their novelty, and exciting our curiosity to discover the cause of their peculiar formation.

Migratory animals are well adapted by their peculiar habits and shapes for the task which has been allotted them. When the annual great migration of Storks takes place in the Archipelago, those young ones which are not able to fly are placed on the backs of the old birds. The Quail would appear to be incapable of a long migration,* but it flies near the ground, and seldom

* An active and intelligent naturalist, Mr. Mummery, of Mar-

more than a few hundred yards at a time. Woodcocks may be almost called nocturnal birds. They feed in the night, and also perform their migrations in the night, and are admirably adapted to do this from their peculiar structure. There is also another circumstance respecting the woodcock which may not be generally known. This bird is now ascertained to breed very frequently in many parts of England and Scotland; the nests, which almost invariably contain four eggs, are found in warm and dry situations, and as soon as the eggs are hatched the old birds immediately remove the young ones by taking them up in their feet, and conveying them to soft ground where they can find worms or insects. I have been assured by an officer of rank in the army, that he has not only repeatedly seen the removal of the young birds in this manner, but that his companion shot an old bird with a young one in its claws. If the woodcock were to build in low, swampy situations, the eggs, which are laid early in the Spring, would be liable to be chilled from rains, or perhaps flooded over. It is a peculiar instinct, therefore, which induces the bird to make its nest

gate, informs us that some quails remain all the year in the Isle of Thanet, and breed there. Mr. Mummery also informs us that he considers that he has discovered two distinct species of the wheatear. J. M.

in dry spots, and to remove the young to places more adapted to their habits.

Quails, although migratory birds, breed to a great extent in this country, and appear to have favourite localities. In one district in Essex, numerous eggs have been found during the mowing season, and as many as sixty couples of these birds have been killed in the course of a few days' shooting on one manor in that county. In many other parts of England it is very seldom indeed that a quail is found.

It is an interesting fact respecting the Quail, and one clearly proved by Mr. Yarrell, in his interesting work on "British Birds," that it was the food of the Israelites in the wilderness. The common quail (Coturnix dactylisonans) is the only species that migrates in enormous multitudes, or indeed that migrates at all. The instinct of the bird was, therefore, made use of by Almighty God to supply the wants of His famishing people; "and it affords," says Mr. Yarrell, "a proof of the perpetuation of an instinct through a period of 3300 years." It does not pervade a whole species, but that part of a species existing within certain geographical limits; an instinct characterised by a peculiarity, which modern observers have also noticed, of making their migratory flight by night. We read in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, "And it came to pass that at

even (probably night) the quails came up and covered the camp." Thus we see the most ancient of all historical works, and natural history, each throwing lights on each other.

I have always considered that the instinct which has been implanted in defenceless birds to make their migrations by night, affords a very extraordinary and delightful proof of the care and tenderness of a benevolent Creator towards His creatures. If such birds as the quail, woodcock, snipe, nightingale, swallow, &c., performed their migrations in the daytime, they would be subject to the attacks of birds of prey, and also of man. How seldom does it strike us that so many of the little migratory warblers, which come to us in the spring, enlivening our walks, and delighting us with their music, have so lately had a midnight flight over extensive seas, guided by His hand who watches over them, and who has declared that not even a sparrow is forgotten by Him. What a strong inducement should this consideration be to every one to avoid all species of cruelty, and to treat with care and with kindness those animals, which a good and beneficent Being himself protects and provides for.

The exterminating propensity of man has deprived us of many birds, and some quadrupeds, which formerly were found in this country. The Bustard no longer stalks over our downs, and the

noble Eagle is seldom to be seen making its beautiful gyrations over our heads. The hoarse croak of the Raven is rarely heard, or its interesting flight seen; and the pretty little Owl (Strix passerina), and the lesser Bittern, once so common, are only looked at as objects of curiosity when accidentally met with.

Happy he
Whom what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad, majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God.
COWPER.

THERE are, perhaps, few things more delightful to a well regulated mind, than the endeavour to discover what is good, wise, and beautiful in the natural objects with which we are everywhere surrounded. If our imagination would allow of our bringing in review before us the stupendous mountains and hills scattered over the face of the earth — the vast ocean, having probably as many mountains and hills concealed beneath its waves — and then let the mind rest on the rich and variegated verdure and beauty of the plains and vallies, we should find them all teeming with life, and all of them affording objects worthy of our contemplation.

It is indeed almost impossible to conceive the multiplicity of created objects, which people the earth, or the enormous number of peculiar species. For instance, in the tropical forests beetles, ants, and many other insects are found, especially at

certain periods of the year, in such prodigious numbers, that no one, who has not been a witness of the fact, would be capable of forming any idea of it. We must not suppose, that these vast quantities of insects are permitted to exist, without some important and useful purposes having to be performed by them. In the forests referred to, vegetation is not only exceedingly rapid, but the decay of it is equally so. Large trees, also, are thrown down by hurricanes or other causes, to which parasitical plants have clung. Forests, therefore, would become almost impassable, both for man or beast, and the atmosphere would be rendered most hurtful to them, if the decaying vegetable matter was not quickly consumed by myriads of insects. Notwithstanding all the researches of naturalists, and they have been great and indefatigable, the varieties of Beetles alone are so exceedingly numerous, that Mr. Darwin, in his "Researches in Natural History," says that it is sufficient to disturb the composure of an entomologist's mind to look forward to the future dimensions of a complete catalogue of these insects. It is also an interesting fact, that carnivorous beetles, and insects that feed on flesh, are very rare in these forests, while they abound in places where animals are very numerous. Mr. Darwin, in his agreeable and valuable work above referred to, states, that a person on first entering a tropical

forest, is astonished at the labours of the ants alone. Well-beaten paths may be seen, branching off in every direction, on which an army of never-failing foragers are seen, some going forth, and others returning, burthened with pieces of green leaf, often larger than their own bodies.

The beautiful manner in which an Almighty Power has adapted certain insects to perform particular services, may be further illustrated by the following fact:—We know that the Caterpillars of many of our English butterflies feed on cabbages and lettuces. These vegetables are now cultivated in the gardens round Rio de Janeiro, having been of late years introduced there. Mr. Darwin informs us that neither the caterpillars of the numerous butterflies, which abound in that country to an extraordinary degree, or even the slugs, will touch them. Other food has been allotted to them to feed upon; in doing which they fulfil one of the designs for which they were created.

We should also bear in mind, that in order to produce the necessary number of insects requisite to carry on the purposes for which they were created, each species has its own particular habitation, in which the young can be lodged and protected. Many of these are formed with great skill, and shew astonishing ingenuity. The Mason-Bee, for instance, may be called an architect, for she makes a building composed of sand and mortar.

Some insects have the power of boring into decaying trees, which they do to a great length with considerable skill and perseverance.* Others penetrate into the earth, or drop their eggs in the water, while many live in communities, defending themselves and their young with so much courage, that even the largest animals have been obliged to yield to their united assaults.

It is evident, that the great multiplicity of insects would be attended with injury, if various causes did not serve to diminish their numbers, when there was an undue proportion of them. Birds devour them, and so do the larger tribe of insects, such as spiders, wasps, &c. Another cause of preventing a superabundant proportion of them, and of keeping down the numbers of certain insects, is the migratory principle which pervades some species, during the progress of which vast numbers are destroyed. For instance, when the Beagle was off the shores of Northern Patagonia, and about ten miles from the Bay of San Blas, Mr. Darwin tells us, that vast numbers of butterflies, in bands or flocks of countless myriads, extended as far as the eye could range.

* Much has been said and written on the subject of the injury done to the elm trees in Hyde Park by a particular grub. I am, however, convinced, that if the injured trees had been properly examined, either positive or incipient decay would have been found to have existed in them before the grubs attacked them.

Even with the aid of a glass, it was not possible to see a space free from butterflies. The seamen cried out, "it was snowing butterflies," and such in fact, was the appearance.* The day had been fine and calm, and the one previous to it equally so. It is not, therefore, probable, that the insects were blown off the land, but we may conclude that they voluntarily took flight. Before sun-set, however, a strong breeze sprung up from the north, and this must have been the cause of tens of thousands of the butterflies having perished. This migratory instinct in insects is not confined to butterflies. Numerous beetles have been found far out at sea. Numbers of them were discovered seventeen miles from land, swimming in the open ocean, and apparently not much injured by the salt water.

The interesting fact of insects being blown from the Patagonian shore was observed by Captain Cook, and has been ably remarked upon by Mr. Darwin. Amongst other facts, he informs us that while the Beagle was in the mouth of the Plata, the rigging was coated with the web of the gossamer Spider. The weather had been fine and clear, and in the morning the air was full of patches of

* Captain Fitzroy, in his narrative, says, that this flight of white butterflies occupied a space of not less than two hundred yards in height, a mile in width, and several miles in length, and that they were as numerous as flakes of snow in the thickest shower.

the flocculent web, as on an autumnal day in England. The ship was then sixty miles distant from the land. Vast numbers of a small spider, about one-tenth of an inch in length, and of a dusky red colour, were attached to the webs. Many thousands of them were on the ship. The little aeronaut, as soon as it arrived on board, was very active, running about, sometimes letting itself fall, and then reascending the same thread; sometimes employing itself in making a small and very irregular mesh in the corners between the ropes. It moved with facility on the surface of the water. Its stock of thread appeared to be inexhaustible; and this I have observed to be the case with our own little gossamer, and, like them, when they were suspended by a single thread, the slightest breath of air would bear them out of sight. On other occasions, when they had been placed, or had crawled on some little eminence, they would send forth a thread, and sail away in a lateral course, with a rapidity which was quite unaccountable. Some spiders, however, have the power of darting through the air without the help of any thread. This I have noticed more than once, and it has been observed by others. M. Virey, in his "Bulletin des sciences naturelles," thinks, that by means of a rapid vibration of the feet, they *walk the air*. In the case of a spider, placed upon a stick, fixed in the centre of a basin-full of water, a

thread is thrown out, of sufficient length to be carried by the slightest breath of air to the edge of the basin, to which it seems to adhere in consequence of some glutinous substance at the end of the thread. By means of this thread the spider makes its escape.

But to return to the migratory instinct of insects. From what has been said, it is evident that they are impelled by an Almighty Providence to change their quarters, probably when their numbers have increased to too great a degree. This certainly is not the case with all migratory animals. The Swallow, for instance, delights in sunny regions, and quits us when autumnal chills arise, but only for a season. When flowers, and sportive insects, and soft gales assure us that winter is over, we are again gladdened with the sight of this graceful and twittering bird, who is justly called, the herald of the Spring.

THE VICARAGE.

Where ends the chancel in a vaulted space,
Sleep the departed Vicars of the place;
Of most, all mention, memory, thought, are past—
But take a slight memorial of the last.

CRABBE.

FEW counties in England have produced more celebrated men, or more beautiful women, than that of Devonshire. It is, also, distinguished for the hospitality of its inhabitants, for their kindness of heart and unaffected goodwill to those strangers who come amongst them, as well as for the charms of its rural scenery. Who that has seen the pretty cottages, with their little gardens and orchards, the shady lanes with their steep banks covered with flowers, the meandering rivers and brooks, the rich vallies, and the bold and commanding scenery, will ever forget them. In wandering over the county, scarcely a spot is to be met with which will not make the lover of what is picturesque, beautiful, or grand, to pause, in order to gaze upon it. And then the sleek red cattle, feeding in the luxuriant meadows, the noble trees nourished by the rich soil of the country, the one-arched

bridges, which everywhere abound over the rapid trout-streams, and afford subjects for a painter; all these are characteristic of this charming county. Every hill that is ascended has its own peculiar and extensive view, while the atmosphere of the southern vallies is so mild, that the myrtle flourishes unsheltered, and grapes are gathered from the garden-walls as fine, and almost as early, as those of Italy.

It was in one of these vallies that the Vicarage of T —— might be seen, with its village church hard by. The latter had one of those sturdy old towers, with its supporting buttresses, which give so much character to some of our ancient village churches, and around which jackdaws cawed and starlings chattered as they emerged from the clustering ivy, which had made its way up the southern side of the tower. Here, also, was the old porch, with its rude carving over its entrance, and the studded door, while the inside had its frame of timbers, a venerable screen, and its white-washed walls decorated with instructive texts of Scripture.

In the chancel were two or three sepulchral brasses, and a monument some two or three centuries old, exhibiting, in Devonshire marble, the effigies of a worthy couple, with their six sons and four daughters, in a sort of kneeling procession, with the names of David, Jonas, Ruth, &c. inscribed under the feet of each of them.

Such is a short description of this village sanctuary, which appeared to stand in the grounds belonging to the vicarage. No fence separated them, but a well-kept and narrow gravelled walk led through a little shrubbery to the porch of the church, close to which an enormous yew-tree flourished with a seat around it, and at the eastern end was a shattered though still magnificent elm. The vicarage stood on rather elevated ground, and was built with the red sand-stone of the country. It had its *mullioned* windows, its little porch, and old gables, with its walls covered with creepers, vines, and roses. Everything around it was in the neatest order, and gave the idea of peace, happiness, and contentment. That the Vicar appreciated the charms of such a retirement, and such a country, was sufficiently evident. He had found out the secret, that to be happy ourselves we must make others so; and he acted upon it on all occasions. He was beloved by the poor around him, for he was their friend and adviser in all their difficulties and distresses, while in his own family he was regarded with unbounded affection. It is always a delightful sight to see parents and children "knit together in unity" and love. A charming halo, if the expression may be applied, a moral influence, is shed around, not only the house, but the neighbourhood, by the example thus afforded. So it was in the village of T ——. There was a

" sweet link of harmony," which appeared to connect its Vicar with all his parishioners. In the pulpit he rivetted attention by the simplicity of his sermons, and the benevolence which he inculcated ;

> Mild were his doctrines, and not one discourse
> But gain'd in softness what it lost in force.

But it is time to say something of the Vicar's family. In consisted of his excellent wife, two daughters, both differing in character and beauty, and his only son Henry, who had been educated on the foundation of a public school, and whose talents and good conduct had gained him a scholarship in one of the universities.

" What a charming day for trout fishing," said the Vicar to his youngest daughter, Lucy, as she gaily tripped by his side towards the river, with his fly-rod in her hand. " The trout will rise well with this southerly wind, and we shall have a dish of fish for your brother when he arrives to-day." Lucy's dark eyes sparkled with animation. A gentle breeze had blown back her little straw bonnet, and discovered a profusion of deep brown hair which fell in ringlets on her shoulders, shewing at the same time the outlines of her beautiful and elastic form. She stopped to gather a honey-suckle, and while putting it into the button-hole of her father's coat, she enquired, with an arch look, how many

fish he expected to catch—"For you know, Papa," she added, "you are always sanguine when we want some." The Vicar looked at her with the utmost affection; and while he patted her cheek, replied—"That, Lucy, depends on the way in which you handle the landing net; for you know how many fish you have lost me by being a little awkward." Lucy denied the charge, but promised to be very careful. The river was a short mile from the vicarage, and was one of those beautiful streams for which Devonshire is so celebrated. On each side were narrow strips of meadows, on which patches of hawthorn might here and there be seen, mixed with hollies and entangled with honey-suckles. Above the meadows were precipitous banks covered with wood, amongst which the wild columbine was peculiarly distinguished. Sometimes a piece of rock peeped out and was partly concealed by the knotty branches of an oak, or the more elegant ramifications of an ash, as they stretched their limbs across and broke the formality of the scene. The river flowed peacefully and calmly through the narrow verdant meads, its course being here and there enlivened by obstructions, either of rocky fragments or shingly beds, over which it brawled and foamed in wild confusion, and then resumed its silent way. It was a spot which an angler would wish to visit.

The Vicar stopped to prepare his rod and line, and selected one of those slate-coloured flies, a blue dun, which are so taking in the Devonshire rivers. He was at the foot of a rude stone bridge,

> An auncient bridge of stone:
> A goodly worke when first it reared was,

having a single elliptic arch, covered with a profusion of ivy, through which the water rushed with considerable force. Above the bridge was one of those picturesque mills which painters delight in, and indeed all lovers of that which adds to the charm of rural scenery. It had its thatched gable and rapid wheel. Placed by the side of a wear over which the river flowed, it occasioned the torrent at the bridge. This was the haunt of some of the larger trout, and after two or three casts, our Vicar succeeded in hooking one. As he was drawing it towards the side of the river, Lucy might be seen on her knees at the edge of the bank with the landing-net in her hand, waiting in all anxiety and eagerness to secure the prize. "Don't be in a hurry, Lucy," said her father; "wait till I bring him close to you. There! you have him now." Lucy rose from her knees, the trout struggling in the net, and her face all animation; then shaking back her locks, which

had partly concealed her face, she asked her father, somewhat triumphantly, whether she had not shewn considerable expertness. He looked at her with that love and admiration with which a father always regards an affectionate and lovely daughter, and after bestowing upon her his commendation, resumed his employment. A sufficient quantity of trout was soon caught, and as they proceeded homewards they congratulated each other on the addition that had been made to their repast. It was a little epoch at the vicarage, for Lucy's brother was to be accompanied by one of his college friends. "I am curious," said Lucy, "to know what sort of a person Henry's friend, Mr. Davenport, is; and if he is agreeable, clever, and handsome. Henry has said very little about him in his letters, except to tell us that they are almost inseparable companions."

"They are not likely to be so much longer," replied the Vicar; "for Mr. Davenport is to be ordained very soon, and presented by his family to a living of considerable value. I cannot tell you whether he is handsome or agreeable, but he is probably clever, or at least something of a poet, if we may judge by those few lines your brother sent us, written by his friend on seeing a mother engaged in teaching her children, and which may be applied so well to your own excellent mother. I will repeat them: —

Within a mother's bosom, sages tell,
Doth all unseen a pitying spirit dwell,
To whom young hearts are giv'n in sway.
Who with love's gentle might resistless draws
Their weak will to obey her equal laws;
Then happiest when they lovingly obey.

"Well," said Lucy, "I hope he is not too much of a poet and philosopher to be unable to dance, for a dance we must have while Henry is with us. You know, Papa, that I am now seventeen, and yet I have hardly ever danced except with my sister." As she said this they came in sight of the vicarage, and on the lawn before it she saw her mother and sister walking with two gentlemen. "I do believe," exclaimed Lucy, "that Henry is arrived, and his friend with him; and now we shall soon see what sort of a person he is. They are coming to meet us," and off she bounded, and was soon embraced by her brother, and presented to his companion.

Davenport was certainly not handsome. He had, however, the appearance of a gentleman combined with that of a studious man; and he had a countenance of much thought, except when it was lighted up with a smile, which was frequently the case. He had attached himself to the side of the Vicar's eldest daughter, Mary (a name we love), as if he had perceived at once the gentleness and meekness of her character. Mary

was, indeed, one of those beings whom it is almost impossible not to love. There was such a total abstinence of all selfishness about her, such a wish to make others happy at whatever sacrifice to her own feelings and wishes, such a sweetness of temper and complacency, and so much animation sparkled in her eyes when she heard those praised whom she loved, that she was looked up to by her family as a being almost too perfect for this world. Less handsome than her sister, and perfectly aware that this was the case, she was indebted to the expression of her countenance for that admiration she generally excited. Born in a sphere of life which, from its seclusion, tranquillity, and peace, scarcely admitted a thought of ambition, Mary went on in the even tenor of her way, as retired and as quiet as the little brooklet which meandered at the foot of the Vicar's garden. Mary was, however, formed to love and to be loved, and her parents knew that whenever she bestowed her heart it would be with an intenseness of no common kind. Such was Mary, a character seldom met with in the haunts of gaiety and fashion.

After the first greeting was over, Mary gently took the basket containing the trout from her father, and after looking into it, and giving him a smile of congratulation, she walked with it to the house in order to give the necessary directions to

have the contents dressed for dinner; that part of the economy of the house being under her management, and no one could conduct it better. On the present occasion the trout were excellent — the small leg of Dartmoor Forest mutton was roasted to perfection, and two plump chickens looked very inviting. Then there was the goodly codling tart, and that delicious thick cream of Devonshire, so much to be commended, and reminding us of the lines of the poet —

> their entertainment at the height,
> In cream and codlings rev'ling with delight.

Let not this account of a vicarial feast be despised. It was spread before the happy party in all the luxury of extreme neatness and propriety, and was succeeded by a bottle of the Vicar's old port, which he kept for extraordinary occasions. Having filled his glass, and bestowed a look of admiration on its brilliant, ruby-like contents, he welcomed his son and his friend in those accents of kindness and goodwill, which always find their way to the heart.

In the evening Lucy played and sang, while Mary was employed in needle-work, Mr. Davenport sitting by her side, and occasionally conversing with her. The Vicar talked with his

son on his future prospects in life, while the happy mother occasionally raised her eyes from her worsted-work to gaze on the assembled group; or mentioned some little village anecdote, which she had picked up in her morning stroll.

At nine o'clock supper was announced; that hospitable meal which is now, alas! so seldom to be met with. Who, however, does not delight in those *noctes cœnæque*, to which, in the good old times of our forefathers, neighbours were invited, and partook of a repast at which harmless jests and a social glass amply made up for the more expensive late dinners of modern times. On these occasions the heart expands with feelings of kindness and good-will to each other; and so it was with the party at the vicarage. There was that delightful cheerfulness and hilarity, which is generally to be met with in a family united together by love and affection. The Vicar called Lucy to his side, and, in a half whisper, asked her to sing his favourite song "On the Daffodil." Lucy looked at Mr. Davenport, and then at her father, with somewhat of a distressed countenance, but upon the request being repeated, she leant on the back of his chair, and holding down her head a little, she sang the following verses; which, as they are not generally known, may not be unacceptable to the lovers of ancient poetry.

Faire Daffodills, we weep to see
You haste away so soone;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attained its noone:
Stay, stay,
Untill the hast'ning day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will goe with you along!

We have short time to stay as you
We have as short a spring,
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing:
We die,
As your hours doe; and drie
Away
Like to the summer's raine,
Or as the pearles of morning dew,
Ne'er to be found again.*

Lucy sang this song, which had been set to music for her by a neighbouring clergyman, with great good taste and feeling, and was rewarded by a grateful look from her father.

"I love the daffodil," said the Vicar; "it is amongst the earliest of our spring flowers, and almost seems to have been created to embellish a poor man's garden, and to decorate his little orchard; for it is there, I always think, it appears

* Herrick.

to the greatest advantage. Shakspeare refers to their early appearance —

> Daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty.

"Well, papa," replied Lucy, "you may admire the daffodil, but the snow-drop and the lily of the valley are my favourites. The former bursts upon us as soon as the snow is melted, and rivals it in purity; but the lily has a still more delicate whiteness, while its extreme modesty makes it hide itself amidst a profusion of leaves, and its delightful fragrance is only known when it is exposed to view." Lucy blushed while she gave utterance to this panegyric on her favourite flowers.

"A pretty moral might be derived from it," said the Vicar, while Davenport added —

> To the curious eye
> A little servitor presents her page
> Of choice instruction with her snowy bells,
> The lily of the vale. She nor affects
> The public walk, nor gaze of mid-day sun:
> She to no state or dignity aspires,
> But silent and alone puts on her suit,
> And sheds her lasting perfume, but for which
> We had not known there was a thing so sweet
> Hid in the gloomy shade.
> To be secure,
> Be humble; to be happy, be content.*

* HURDIS.

The village clock now struck the hour for prayers, and when his servants were assembled, the Vicar read some verses from the word of God, and then offered up his little tribute of gratitude for the many benefits which had been bestowed upon him—prayed for a continuance of them, and for a blessing upon his family, his parishioners, and upon all mankind. How much is it to be regretted that the spirit of benevolence, of unaffected charity, of piety and good-will that pervaded this little family circle, is not more cultivated, and more extended. Happy would be each individual, and happy would be mankind in general, if the pure doctrines of Christian charity, and love to each other, were more cultivated and more acted on. But how few people consider that a life which has been profitable to others conduces also to our own happiness, and produces that cheerful and thankful spirit, which is a far greater and more real treasure than all the gifts which fortune can bestow.

The party assembled at an early breakfast the next morning, and as the day was fine, it was proposed that the Vicar's jaunting car should be put in requisition, in order to show Davenport a celebrated water-fall at some miles distance. Lucy was all glee at the thoughts of the excursion, and her most becoming bonnet was put on for the occasion. Mary's dress was of a quieter description,

and on the arrival of the car at the door, she busied herself in seeing that everything was prepared for the drive, in case of a change in the weather. The Vicar's wife declined being of the party, but promised to have tea ready on their return, which would probably be at a late hour, in consequence of the distance and the hilly roads. The Vicar took his fly-rod, and thus they set off, full of anticipations of pleasure from the day's excursion. As they passed slowly along the deep sandy lanes, Lucy would jump from the car to gather a favourite flower, or walk gaily past it, carolling one of the village songs of her native county: or as they ascended a hill on the skirts of a wild moor, she would constantly call the attention of the party to some fine prospect or to some pretty cottage peeping out of a wood, and forming one of those sylvan attractions which harmonize so well with what is beautiful in nature.

Proceeding onwards, a splendid scene burst upon their view. "Look, Mr. Davenport," exclaimed Lucy, "there's the dreadful bridge, over the river, hanging as if it were in the air, while the cascade bursts down from the hills, and dashes in clouds of vapour into the tremendous pit below."

"It is indeed," said the Vicar, "a scene of turbulence and havoc under the bridge and amidst the rocks, but see how the brook collects, after its

desperate plunge, into a clear and sparkling stream, and starts off quietly and calmly to pursue its course, through those meadows enamelled with flowers and shaded by noble trees."

They had now arrived at the foot of the bridge, and walked to the centre of it, from which the scene might be beheld to the greatest advantage. Here the waters were seen rushing from rock to rock, forming cascades, and producing that turbulence which Lucy had described. The stream appeared to emerge from a rude copse, with lofty cliffs above, covered with trees which towered beyond it, and gave singular beauty to the scene.

The banks, and some of the rocks, were clothed with moss, fern, and patches of ivy, and here and there

Nature had set
The primrose and the violet.

Fox-gloves were in great abundance, and were washed by the spray as they hung over the rushing waters. It was a spot where a poet would have all his enthusiasm excited, and which, consequently, induced Davenport to write the following descriptive

SONNET.

Impatient of his sojourn on the hills
The stream comes thundering down its mountain way,
From rock to rock mid clouds of flashing spray,
And with stern voice the tributary rills

Calls to his course impetuous, then he fills
The hollow concave of the vale; — delay
Is none from sheltering cove or root-bound bay,
That with the whirling current ceaseless thrills; —
Yet safe beside each dripping stone, its bells
The fox-glove hangs — the green fern smiles to see
The headlong waters in their anarchy
Bathing its feet, and mid their mossy cells
Each sweet and solitary floweret dwells
As in the bosom of tranquillity.

The contrast between the scene attempted to be described, and the glassy water as they meandered through the meadows, was very striking. The current was indeed so slow, that it scarcely appeared to have any motion; and the view of its retiring course was at length lost by the intervention of a bold projection in the distant landscape.

Seeing some trout rise, the Vicar prepared his rod, leaving the rest of the party to explore the more hidden beauties of the locality. On quitting the bridge, they descended by the side of it, carefully and gradually, for the way was rough and precipitous. They were desirous of arriving at the pool under the cascade, and they could only do this, by passing close to the margin of the stream, sometimes scrambling over rocks, or creeping under the projecting branches of huge old oaks, which spread themselves over them. By thus varying their way over rocks, and banks, and bushes, they suddenly found themselves in the

gloom of the dark coppice overhead, while the foam of the cascade appeared at the end of a long vista, fringed with trees rich in foliage, the intermediate space being filled up with rocks and tumbling waters. Here they found a little green spot, so hidden by the bushes and fern, as not to be visible till they came upon it, and here they rested themselves, gazing in silence on the scene around them.

On rejoining the vicar they found him in some alarm at their prolonged absence. He had put up his rod, after having caught a few trout, and was preparing to make his way to the bridge, in hopes of finding his daughters and their companions. The horse, which had been turned loose to graze, was soon harnessed to the car, the crazy wooden bridge was crossed in safety, and they proceeded to a little country inn, about a mile beyond it, in order to procure a dinner. As they proceeded, they saw a road leading to the left, through a dense wood; and the Vicar remarked, that long as he had resided in that part of the country, he had never seen Mr. Neville, the owner of an ancient mansion, at a short distance, who belonged to one of the oldest families in the county, and formerly possessed great landed property in it. "It is not only surprising," said the Vicar, "that I should never have seen him myself, but that none of my neighbours should have done so. He is a very old man, and was formerly a very extra-

vagant one, and in consequence has been obliged to sell many of his estates. He clings, however, to the abode of his ancestors, and a maiden daughter has devoted herself to take care of him. He had an only son, who died some years ago, and left one child, whom I hear is lately returned from Spain, where he greatly distinguished himself." This account interested the party as they proceeded to the inn, or rather ale-house, where they hoped to get something to eat. It was a thatched cottage, the thatch over-hanging the small casement windows, with their little diamond-shaped panes of glass, a porch at the door, the front covered with an old but flourishing vine. It is known by the sign of the Three Trouts, and might safely be recommended to all the brothers of the angle, for its extreme cleanliness, and the civility of the hostess.

Whenever a house of this sort is to be met with, the occasional resort of honest disciples of Izaak Walton, a certain degree of comfort is sure to be found. So it was in the present instance. The party were ushered into a room, having a "nicely sanded floor," a three-cornered cupboard, in which some old china and glass were displayed; some waxen ornaments might be seen on the chimney-piece, representing the Virgin and child, and coloured prints, retailed by travelling Jews, pourtraying Britannia and the Lion, the Prodigal Son,

Daniel in the Den of Lions, and other Scripture subjects, all richly painted in red and blue. The family bible might also be seen on a table, reposing on a piece of green baize, backed by a showy japanned tea tray, and by its side was a pitcher filled with fresh-gathered cowslips.

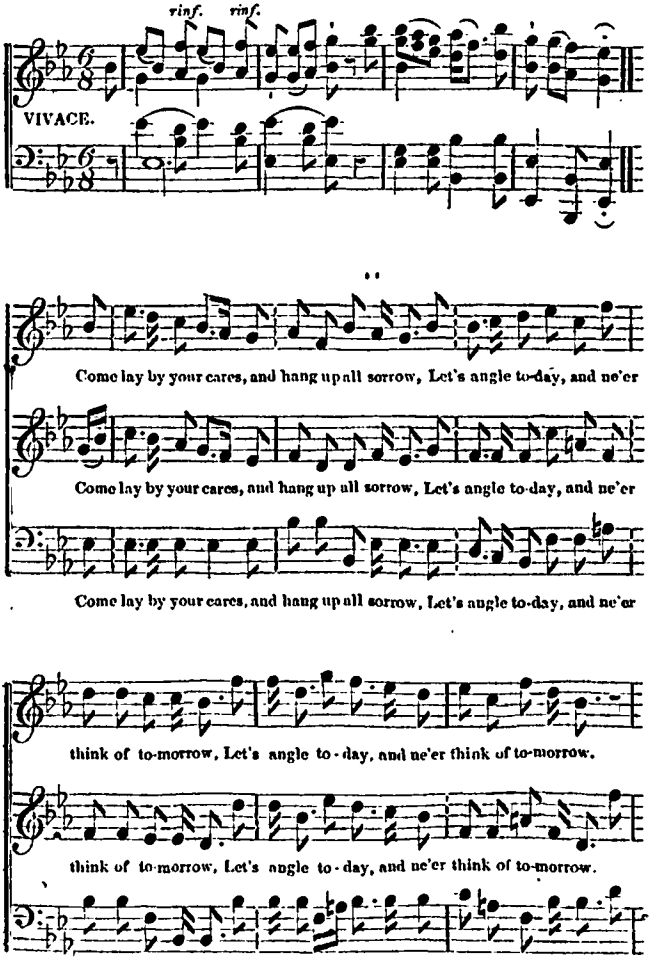
The arrival of a party of six, eagerly calling for dinner, put the landlady in a bustle. The Vicar's trout, however, came to her aid, and she was able to satisfy their appetites with a repast, which no honest angler would think a bad one. They were waited upon by their hostess's daughter, a girl of about sixteen, as pretty, as innocent, and as honest, as Walton's Maudlin. Her dress, which must be described, for it was the becoming dress of the peasantry of Devonshire, consisted of a *linsey-woolsey* petticoat, a checquered handkerchief covering her bosom, black worsted stockings, thick shoes, her arms being bare, and her petticoat pinned up behind. Everything was pleasing to persons inclined to be pleased. The bottled cider was excellent, and was qualified by some of the Vicar's wine, which had been considerately brought in the car, and which added to the hilarity of the party.

The evening was now drawing to a close. The horse was ordered to be harnessed, the bill was paid, and they were preparing to take their departure; when the Vicar, as a lover of the piscatory

GLEE FOR THREE VOICES,

DEDICATED TO THE

Walton and Cotton Fishing-Club.


rinf.
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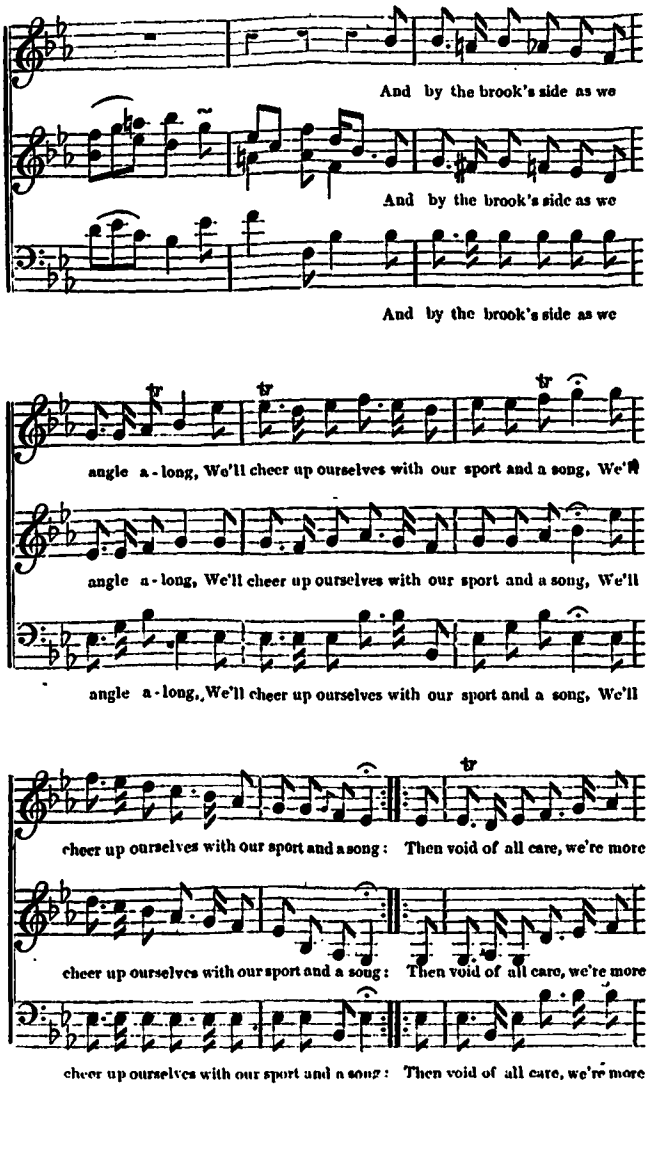
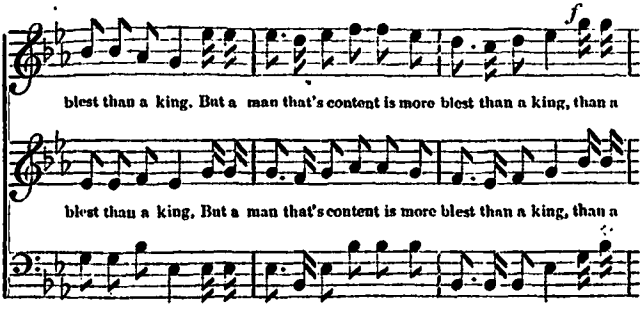
VIVACE.
Come lay by your cares, and hang up all sorrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er
Come lay by your cares, and hang up all sorrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er
Come lay by your cares, and hang up all sorrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er
think of to-morrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er think of to-morrow.
think of to-morrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er think of to-morrow.
think of to-morrow, Let's angle to-day, and ne'er think of to-morrow.


And by the brook's side as we
And by the brook's side as we
And by the brook's side as we
angle a-long, We'll cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song, We'll
angle a-long, We'll cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song, We'll
angle a-long, We'll cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song, We'll
cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song: Then void of all care, we're more
cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song: Then void of all care, we're more
cheer up ourselves with our sport and a song: Then void of all care, we're more

happy than they That sit up-on thrones, and kingdoms do sway. That
happy than they That sit up-on thrones, and kingdoms do sway, That
happy than they That sit up-on thrones, and kingdoms do sway, That
p
sit upon thrones, and kingdoms do sway. For
sit upon thrones, and kingdoms do sway. For
sit upon thrones, and kingdoms do sway. For
sceptres and crowns dis-quiet still bring, But a man that's con-tent is more
sceptres and crowns dis-quiet still bring, But a man that's con-tent is more
sceptres and crowns dis-quiet still bring, But a man that's con-tent is more


f
blest than a king. But a man that's content is more blest than a king, than a
blest than a king. But a man that's content is more blest than a king, than a
blest than a king. But a man that's content is more blest than a king, than a

f
king, than a king, is more blest than a king, But a man that's content is more
king, than a king, is more blest than a king, But a man that's content is more
king, than a king, is more blest than a king, But a man that's content is more

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art, asked his son and daughter to sing his favourite Angler's Glee.*

It was late when our party set off homewards. A warm breeze had sprung up, and the beauteous moon might be seen sometimes appearing to wade through the clouds, then becoming obscured, and again bursting forth in all its glory. As they approached the crazy wooden bridge already described, Lucy was beginning to express her fears at the danger of passing it, when her enthusiasm was awakened by seeing the moon-beams playing on the waters of the falling cascade. The foam and the spray, as they were dashed on the rocks, glittered from the effects of the refulgent light, and then all was obscured. Again the moon burst forth, and the carriage was stopped, that they might enjoy the scene. It was one worthy of Salvator Rosa. They were again proceeding, and were about to pass the bridge, when Lucy declared that she heard a shout, and begged her father to stop.

"It is only the noise of the falling waters which you hear," said her father.

"No, no," exclaimed Lucy, — "there, I hear it again — do stop, dear Papa, a moment."

"Stop, for heaven's sake, stop," said some one

* The song on the preceding page is dedicated to my friends of the Walton and Cotton fishing clubs, as a trifling token of regard from their old companion and chairman,

THE AUTHOR.

rather behind them, from a field on the right of the road.

"Your lives are in danger," exclaimed the person, in a voice almost exhausted with running. "Thank heaven that I have been in time."

A young and well-dressed person now made his appearance, and explained to the wondering party, that the centre of the bridge had fallen in about an hour before — that he had paid a man to keep watch at it, but finding that he had neglected to do so, and having, from a rising ground, seen the approach of the carriage, he had run through copse and brake just in time to warn them of their danger. "I should have been too late," added he, "had you not heard my shout."

As the moon burst forth, they were enabled to see the escape they had had from falling into the turbulent abyss below. The Vicar was occupied in mental thanksgiving for their preservation from a fearful death, and then joined in grateful acknowledgements to the stranger, by whose exertions they had been rescued.

"We must now," he said, "consider how we are to dispose of ourselves for the night. The other bridge over the stream is at a considerable distance, and the road to it is almost impassable for a carriage, especially at night."

"We had better," said Mary, calmly, "return

to our small inn; but then how shall we let Mama know the cause of our detention — she will be alarmed for our safety."

"I can easily cross the river below the cascade," replied Henry, "by means of a little swimming and wading, and I will be with my mother in less than an hour and a half."

The Vicar, who knew the activity of his son, and that he was an excellent swimmer, accompanied him to the stream, saw him safely land on the opposite bank, and left him making the best of his way to the Vicarage. "On rejoining his daughters, Mary repeated her request of returning to the inn, but this was strongly opposed by the stranger.

"It is quite impossible that I can allow it," added he — "my grandfather, Mr. Neville, resides at a short distance, and both he and my aunt, to say nothing of myself, would be much hurt if they were denied the pleasure of shewing you a trifling hospitality. The old mansion is not now what it once was, but still we have the means left of making you all comfortable, which you would not be under the roof of my old acquaintance Mrs. Tucker."

Thus pressed, the Vicar accepted the invitation, and two countrymen having arrived to secure the bridge from the chance of any accident, they pro-

ceeded towards Coombe-Neville, along the road they had seen in the morning. As they entered the thick coppice, the stranger led the horse, and this gave the Vicar and Mr. Davenport, who were both antiquaries, an opportunity of speculating on the style of the ancient mansion they were about to visit.

"I expect to see," said the former, "oriel windows, with the arms of the family, in stained glass, old family portraits, and a fine old baronial hall, fitted up with the horns of deer, tapestries, and armour." Davenport talked of black oak parlours, high-backed chairs, and ancient carvings. Mary thought of her gentle mother; and Lucy, who had a little romance in her disposition, of the handsome young officer. In this mood they had proceeded about half a mile through the wood, when on emerging from it, the moon shone brightly on a huge gateway with massive iron-work, ornamented with armorial bearings upon it. After passing it, they entered an avenue of walnut trees, in which they were again almost in darkness. A deep-toned clock struck the hour, a mastiff "hoarsely bay'd," a glimmering light was seen through the trees, and they soon after arrived in front of a large building, composed of masses whose outline could not well be distinguished. Captain Neville went forward, and, calling out, was soon answered from within.

The door of the house was opened by a female servant, followed by a respectable-looking old lady, who bore evident marks of anxiety in her face.

"My dear William," she said, "what has kept you out so long. I have been quite alarmed about you — but bless me, here is company — who are they?" The little history of their escape was soon told, and with the greatest cordiality and kindness they were invited into the house.

"Let us be thankful for your escape," said the good lady; "and now, William, call some one to take care of the horse." This was soon done, and they entered a large hall, gloomy for want of sufficient light. After traversing three spacious rooms, in which the good Vicar saw many old portraits, they came to a smaller one, in which candles and a blazing wood fire produced as much cheerfulness as dark but shining oak wainscoating would permit.

In a high-backed wicker chair, placed by the side of the fire, sat a venerable-looking old man, apparently about eighty-five years of age, having a long white beard, and flowing white hair, dark eyes, nearly devoid of expression, and features which shewed that he must formerly have been very handsome. On the entrance of the party, he rose, bowed, and made signs for them to approach the fire. As they seated themselves in the old-fashioned chairs, Mr. Neville, in a voice that made them start, said —

"You are welcome to Coombe-Neville; may I take the liberty of asking your names."

The Vicar mentioned his name, and introduced Mr. Davenport.

"Davenport," said the old gentleman, whose favourite study had been genealogy — "Davenport — that must have been before the Flodden charge — you bear only three bars doucette without the border engrailed."

"Because," said Mr. Davenport, kindly, and as if to encourage the old man's prattle, "we are not descended from Lord William, who obtained that honour."

The old gentleman's face appeared confused. He muttered to himself — "bars doucette," and then added, "but I forget it all." Turning next to the Vicar, he again asked his name. On being told it, he looked at him as at one who had no ancestry to boast of, and then said something which implied a hint that such was the case. The worthy Vicar, with all his modesty and humility, was a little annoyed at this sneer on his pedigree, and perhaps shewed it by a start and an exclamation. The old gentleman, whose high breeding could not be mistaken, was immediately sensible that he had been guilty of a breach of propriety, and hid his face with his two hands. It was some time before he recovered from his confusion, when again turning to Davenport, he said —

"Your crest is the demi-lion, but no Flodden scutcheon. I have two white saltiers, Neville impaling Neville, for I married one of my own name—poor Elizabeth. We do not bear the rose, the Yorkists took that. We were Lancastrian Nevilles, steady to old Earl Ralph, but Cicely married Plantagenet, and he wanted to be king—but I forget it all now." In this way he continued muttering to himself, till he became at first indistinct and then silent.

Mr. Neville was the representative of one of the oldest families in Devonshire. He succeeded early to his property, and married a cousin of his own name, who brought with her nothing but her beauty and a taste for show and hospitality, to which her husband was but too much inclined. He kept fox-hounds and an open house; and as economy was but little thought of, there was consequently great waste and extravagance. Some of the estates were either mortgaged or sold, in order to procure a supply of money to pay the demands of the creditors. Things went on in this way from year to year, getting from bad to worse, till the death of his wife and his only son, on whom he doted, put a stop to his career of extravagance. Little then remained but the family mansion, and a small estate around it. His son, annoyed at his father's expensive habits, had entered the army, and married a respectable lady in Ireland. He

afterwards went with his regiment to India, where his wife accompanied him, and died, after having given birth to a son. He remained some years in India, and then returned to his paternal home on account of ill health, and died soon after his arrival, committing his child to the care of his sister. The death of his son, added to his other calamities, occasioned Mr. Neville to experience a partial loss of reason. For three years he continued speechless, his fine person became bent and wasted, and nothing but the assiduous care and tenderness of his daughter, prevented his sinking into utter vacuity of mind. His little grandson, although placed on his knee, failed to attract his attention.

During a severe frost, his daughter had left Mr. Neville extended on the sofa apparently in a lethargic state. On returning to the room she found him bathed in a flood of tears. She tried to soothe him, but his tears continued to flow. At last he pointed to the window and on one of the panes of frosted glass he had written—"poor John is dead." This effort had afforded some relief to his mind. He arose from the couch still sobbing, and tracing with his finger the words on the glass, exclaimed in a feeble tone—"poor John is dead."

His daughter hailed this return to reason with delight, but it was then only momentary. He relapsed into his lethargic state, and continued so for some

days. He was, however, again heard to exclaim "poor John is dead." His little grandson was in the room, and looked up to him with the sweet smile of a pleased infant. "No," said the poor old man, "John is not dead — this is my boy."

By careful management these rays of reason were cherished and retained; the child became an object of his love and seduced him to take exercise. To a certain degree he regained a liking for some of his former pursuits. He had once made some progress in literature, but his great taste was for heraldry and genealogy. His memory had now greatly failed him, and he chiefly dosed away his life in his easy chair. According to his usual custom he had retired early to bed, and supper was soon afterwards announced. The gratitude felt to Captain Neville, his agreeable and sensible conversation, and the unaffected kindness and benevolence of Mrs. Neville, for she had dropped her more juvenile appellation, rendered it a pleasant meal. Mary and Lucy were accompanied soon after it was over by Mrs. Neville to their sleeping room, Mr. Davenport was shewn to his, and the Vicar and Captain Neville remained in conversation. It was at this time the former received the greater part of the information, which has just been communicated; Captain Neville concluded by saying that his leave of absence, which he had obtained in consequence of a wound, was

nearly expired, and that he must rejoin his regiment in Spain. "You see," he continued, "the state in which my poor Grandfather is, keeping my Aunt in a constant anxiety on his account. Notwithstanding her strong religious principles, and natural cheerfulness of disposition, she must necessarily feel depressed at the sort of life she leads. Now, my dear Sir, I have long been acquainted with your character for benevolence and kindness of heart; if, therefore, you would now and then drive over to see my Aunt, and bring your charming daughters with you, I should leave this country with much less regret than would otherwise be the case."

It may readily be supposed that our good Vicar promised to comply with this request, and they separated for the night with cordial feelings of good will, as if they had long been acquainted with each other.

Captain Neville was, indeed, one of those beings whom it was impossible not to admire and love. He had a frankness and openness of disposition, joined to good looks, and such a soundness of rectitude founded on religious truth, which bad example and the passions of youth had not been able to undermine, that he afforded a proof that a soldier may be a christian as well as a gentleman. There can be no doubt that when a young officer is enabled, by applying to Him from whom alone

he will receive assistance to do so, to withstand the various temptations which surround him (and thank Heaven there are many such in the British Army), he affords a bright example of Christian perfection and moral courage. Happy will be his lot in another world, while he will be respected and admired in this!

The Vicar looked around his apartment with the eye of an antiquary. There was the old fashioned red-damask bed, a chest of drawers of yew tree with long brass handles, a looking-glass in a japanned frame, high-backed chairs worked in worsted, and damaged portraits of some of the warriors and dames of the Neville family. The Vicar opened his window, and saw the pale moon-beams glimmering amid the branches of a tall tree which shadowed it. He thought he heard the distant roar of the cataract, and his heart expanded with gratitude for the preservation he and his family had so recently experienced. He was awoke early in the morning by receiving a note from his wife telling him of the safety of their son; and sending him and her daughters the necessary articles to enable them to dress with comfort.

On entering the breakfast room, the tall and fine figure of Mr. Neville was seen to advantage as he rose from his chair. He made a very ceremonious and respectful bow to Mr. Davenport,

but took little notice of the Vicar. His daughters, however, appeared to please him, and he held out his hand to each of them and kissed theirs. Relapsing soon afterwards into a state of abstraction, he traced with his finger as was his usual custom, "Poor John is dead." His daughter wishing to divert his attention, asked him whether he thought that he should be able to shew his guests over Coombe-Neville.

"Neville, of Coombe-Neville," said the old man, appearing to regain his recollection, "he bears gules, a saltier argent — but — but — 'ultimus suorum' — what is the remainder of it?" He was evidently thinking of his son as supposing him the last of his antient family, and this occasioned him to give a look of utter despondency. There was something inexpressibly affecting in this look, and the allusion to the extinction of his family. The Vicar felt it, and was silent. There is, perhaps, something in the grief of an old man, which touches the feelings more acutely than the distress of either the young or beautiful; —

> Like some sad statue, speechless, pale, he stood
> Fix'd in a stupid lethargy of woe.

But we must take leave of him, and accompany the party over the house. The Hall had an open roof, the huge beams supported by worked stone corbeils, with ornamented spandrels. In the windows were the arms of the Neville family, and the

sides were decorated with old armour, horns of deer, and portraits of favourite horses and dogs. An enormous fire-place was at one end in which the Christmas log was wont to burn, and at the other, a large table of Devonshire marble, on which fishing-rods, nets, and other implements of sporting were deposited. A door on one side of the hall opened upon a terrace, which went the whole length of the house. Below it was an extensive lawn, having at each corner a leaden statue, and beyond it was a grove of tall trees, on the tops of which rooks were busily engaged in feeding their young. A half circular wall terminated each end of the terrace, in which busts of some of the Roman Emperors had been inserted.

There were two large drawing-rooms, with pannels of black oak, on which full length portraits of some of Mr. Neville's ancestors might be seen in grim armour or velvet dresses. The furniture of these rooms was about the time of James the First. The library was well filled with books, in which a learned friend of ours might revel in the charms of black lettered poetry and antient romances.

Such was Coombe-Neville, affording a proof of the wealth of its former possessors, but now, from neglect, fast falling to decay.

Our party took leave of Captain Neville and his Aunt with many grateful acknowledgements,

but not before the former had promised to pass a few days at the Vicarage before he departed to join his regiment. Lucy heard this announcement with a degree of pleasure which she was unable to conceal. The handsome young officer, his courage, his wounds, his old family — all these added to the service he had rendered them, caused her to consider him as the *beau ideal* of a hero on which her imagination had sometimes dwelt. He was not less struck with the charms of Lucy, nor was this to be wondered at. She had youth, beauty, a fascination of manner, and a playfulness of disposition, joined to great good sense and sweetness of temper, which were perfectly captivating. With this mutual feeling towards each other, they separated.

It is unnecessary to state how much pleasure the safe arrival of the party at the Vicarage caused, or with what interest the detail of their adventures was listened to. In process of time, due preparations were made to receive their expected guest. A cheerful bed-room was got ready, containing a furniture of dimity, white as snow:—who does not feel the pleasure of awakening in the morning and finding himself in a bed of this description? A casement window opened to the morning sun, having honeysuckles and jasmine trained around it, emitting a delightful fragrance, while birds sang their notes of gratitude from the adjoining lilacs,

laburnums, and seringas, now in full blossom. Happy Parsonage! what lover of rural simplicity and rural happiness, would exchange your little lawn, your smiling flowers and meandering walks, for the luxury of a metropolis, or the grandeur of a palace? Here was the abode of happiness and peace, secure from harm by the love and affection of the simple-minded cottagers which surrounded it.

Captain Neville's arrival was hailed with unfeigned pleasure. His very occupation amid the din of war and bloodshed, had the better enabled him to appreciate the charms and the simplicity of life at the Vicarage. His duty called him far away, but he sighed for repose, and would willingly have exchanged his bright military prospects for the seclusion of the place in which he was now a guest. His admiration of Lucy encreased every hour, for it was in her native village that she was seen to the greatest advantage. He walked, played at chess (a dangerous game), and sang with her. If they entered a cottage together, Lucy was received with unfeigned delight, for all her poorer neighbours loved her: "Do'ye, Miss, sit down — do'ye, Miss, let me gather you some flowers," or some other trifling offer was made with hearty good will. The old parish clerk talked with pleasure of having officiated at her christening, and her ancient nurse welcomed her with the affection of a mother. It was now generally known that

Captain Neville had been probably the means of preserving the lives of their beloved pastor and his family, and he was welcomed accordingly by the grateful peasants. Lucy heard their praises of him with delight, while she sorrowed at the thought that in a short time she should see him no more.

On his return to Coombe-Neville, he informed the Vicar in a letter of his prospects in life, of the necessity of his remaining with his regiment till the termination of the war, of his attachment to Lucy, and, should he be able to procure her consent, asking the Vicar to allow him to make her an offer of his hand as soon as he returned to England. It need not be told how much pleasure, this letter gave at the Vicarage, or how happy Lucy was, and how soon her walks with Captain Neville were resumed. The hour of his departure at length came. Lucy was miserable, and expressed her fears, her love, her hopes — and thus they separated. Lucy heard from Captain Neville before he embarked, and again after his arrival in Spain. Coombe-Neville was visited and revisited with the tidings. Mrs. Neville wept, and rejoiced, and kissed Lucy, delighted with the choice of her nephew, and anticipating their future happiness.

In Neville's last letter he had said nothing of an approaching battle. That battle, however, was

fought and won chiefly by the great exertions and bravery of the division to which his regiment was attached. He was known to have been wounded, and when the returns were sent in, he was reported as missing. This was notified in the Gazette accordingly.

Let us fancy Lucy anxiously watching for the arrival of the post. They are seated at the breakfast-table. Her head is turned every instant to see if the postman is coming. He at last stops at the little wicket-gate at the bottom of the lawn. Lucy runs to meet him, but returns slowly with the Vicar's St. James's Chronicle. "No letter, papa, again to-day," said Lucy with a sigh, as she gave her father the paper. All eyes were turned upon him as he opened it. There was a fearful apprehension that the cause of Captain Neville's long silence would now be explained. The Vicar read. A perceptible change took place in his countenance. A look of alarm, and then of great distress could not be mistaken. "Oh! tell me at once what has happened," exclaimed Lucy.

"Be composed, my dear child," said the Vicar, "and you shall know all. Remember that whatever happens is the disposition of a wise Providence."

"I do, I do," replied Lucy; "but tell me the worst at once — is Neville wounded?"

"There has been a battle," said the Vicar, "and

he has been returned missing; he is, therefore, most probably a prisoner."

Lucy heard no more — a faint sickness came over her, and she was supported by her affectionate mother and sister. On recovering, she begged to be left alone with her father. The time was now arrived when he hoped that the sound religious principles, which had been inculcated would not be thrown away upon his afflicted daughter; nor was he disappointed. With what delight, with what gratification did he hear from her lips a declaration of her reliance on Divine strength for support and comfort, and the thankfulness that she had a heavenly conductor who could diffuse hope in one of the darkest hours of life. Perhaps, the good Vicar had seldom experienced a more pleasing, or a more triumphant moment than this. Happy as he was in the love and affection of his family, he had the still greater happiness of seeing his virtuous daughter practising those precepts, which, as the guardian of her youth, he had used his best endeavours to instil into her mind. After a short time, he perceived that religion had given a steadiness to her virtue, and preserved her from feeling herself utterly abandoned. Still, Lucy had a tremulous melancholy which made her start at every sound. She endeavoured, however, as much as possible to conceal it, poured out her father's tea as usual, and occupied herself

in the little arrangements of the family. She longed for the return of her brother, who had some time before accompanied his friend to his rectory. She wanted to consult him as to the best means to be adopted to procure some tidings of the probable fate of Neville. He at length arrived, and brought with him the intelligence that Neville had been wounded and taken prisoner, and that, on the retreat of the French, he had been left at a small village at the foot of the Pyrenees. Lucy's strength of mind now shewed itself. With the permission of her parents she determined to seek out Neville, and her brother was to accompany her. Their preparations were soon made, and as the communications with Bourdeaux were open, they arrived at that city after a quick and prosperous passage. Their next object was to gain the village in which Neville was supposed to have been left, and which was now considerably in the rear of the English army. As they approached the village, after travelling all night, Lucy's heart sickened with fear, nor could she raise her eyes to that glorious sight — the sun bursting forth upon the distant mountains. Henry stopped the carriage on seeing an English soldier crawl out of a cabin by the side of the road.

"Do you know anything about Captain Neville, and where we can find him?" said Henry.

"Captain Neville," replied the soldier, "was he

not my own officer, and a better or a braver there could not be; and was I not going to see if I could do anything for him, for he is sorely wounded."

"But where can we find him?" enquired Henry eagerly.

"Find him," said the soldier; "he's at the last cottage in the village, straight on there; but I doubt if they'll let you see him, for he's very bad."

"But we are come from England on purpose to nurse him," said Henry. "Drive on."

"God bless you," exclaimed the old soldier, as he received a sovereign from Henry, "and the captain too."

Who shall describe Lucy's feelings during this little dialogue. She pressed her brother's arm in an agony of woe. "Not see him?—sorely wounded," — was all that occurred to her. The carriage at last stopped, and Henry assisted his sister to alight. They gently opened the cottage door, and saw a veteran soldier with a wooden leg busily engaged in preparing food at the fire.

"Is Captain Neville here?" said Henry; "and how is he?"

"Hush! he will hear you," replied the soldier, "if he is awake; but I hope he is asleep, for he requires it sadly."

"Is he alone?" asked Henry.

"The good clergyman is with him," said the

soldier; "and if the captain is asleep he will come in here."

Lucy was seated on a chair, her heart throbbing violently, and her hands lifted up as if in prayer, when the inside door was gently opened, and a respectable and aged Abbé entered the room. He looked at the strangers with surprize.

"How is captian Neville?" enquired Henry.

Lucy was unable to ask the question, but she stood looking upon the Abbé, as if her whole happiness and even life depended on his answer.

"He is better to-day than I have seen him yet," said the good Abbé, "and I have great hopes that he may recover. He sleeps calmly."

Lucy threw her arms round the Abbé, and sobbed on his shoulder. This then thought he, is the young and beautiful female, whose name I have heard sighed during feverish nights and restless days; and here she is almost amidst the horrors and desolation of war, to seek a being she loved. As he gazed on her he felt for her the affection of a father, and this bond was never broken.

The Abbé S—— had been one of the chaplains of the unfortunate Louis XVI., and, after his death, emigrated to England, where he arrived almost without money and without friends. After undergoing many difficulties and privations, he was received as tutor in a gentleman's family,

where he remained as an inmate during a period of twenty years, beloved and respected by all who knew him. He returned to France after the battle of Leipsic, and lived upon a small pension granted to him by Louis XVIII., and the interest of some money he had saved in England. His gratitude to the English was unbounded; and while on a visit to some relations at Bourdeaux, he heard of the sick and neglected officer, and, like the good Samaritan, went to afford him all the relief in his power. He had nursed him with the tenderness of a mother, had dressed his wounds, administered to his wants, and soothed the perturbation and restlessness of his mind. No night was too long, no day too tedious for the benevolent Abbé.

But we must describe him. He was apparently about seventy or seventy-five years of age, tall, somewhat stout, and with the appearance of a highly-bred, gentlemanlike man. He made his daily toilette with a precision and neatness which were habitual to him. His clothes were nicely brushed, his black silk stockings were without a wrinkle, and kept so by silver buckles at his knees; — his hair, though white, was powdered, and was seen neatly rolled up behind. His countenance beamed with benevolence. No bad passion had ever disturbed it, for it bore the signs of purity, Christian charity, and child-like simplicity. Poor

himself, by submitting to privations of no ordinary kind, he enabled himself to assist those who were still poorer. Little children ran to meet him, for they loved him, and the aged blessed him as he passed their doors. This is no over-charged description, but the exact portrait of one of the most perfect of human beings. His religion was the religion of peace, good-will, and benevolence, derived, it is to be hoped, from that source from which all our best motives should spring.

"And when may we see him," enquired Lucy, after the good Abbé had heard their little history.

"It is impossible to say how he will be when he awakes," said the Abbé; "but if he is as much refreshed by his sleep as I hope he will be, I will prepare him to-morrow to receive the news of your arrival. But you must expect to see him greatly altered. His first wound in the arm fractured it, but did not stop him; he soon afterwards received a wound in the head, which rendered him nearly insensible, and he long fluctuated between life and death. Slow as his progress has been towards amendment, it has nevertheless, I am happy to say, been gradual, and his fever has evidently abated."

Could I but see him, thought Lucy, and sit by him, and watch him, he would soon be well, (she had forgotten that the Abbé had been doing this), and then I would dress his wounds, and some-

times sing one of those songs he used to be so fond of. Lucy, with all her gentleness and softness of character, was somewhat impatient if her wishes were not immediately complied with. This arose from the indulgence which had been shewn her, both by her parents and her sister. She now thought it hard that she could not see Neville; but this the surgeon, who occasionally attended him, and the good Abbé positively prohibited, and she sat at the window of her little room in an adjoining cottage, watching the pale moon and thinking of her lover.

The day at last arrived when the Abbé had the pleasure of announcing to Lucy, that he had prepared Captain Neville to see her. It is unnecessary to describe their meeting, or the rapid progress which he afterwards made towards recovery. In a few days he was removed to Bourdeaux, and having good surgical attendance, he rapidly recovered.

The time now arrived when they were to part from the kind-hearted Abbé. Neville's gratitude was unbounded, and Lucy wept and embraced him with the affection of a daughter.

Her brother joined with Neville and herself in persuading the Abbé to pay them a visit as soon as the war was over. This he promised to do.

"Mon cher enfant," he said to Lucy, "vous m'avez si souvent nommé vos chers parents, et

votre aimable sœur, que je brule d'impatience de les connoître, et je sens qu'ils me deviendroient bientot presqu'aussi cher que vous m'êtes vous même." And thus they parted.

There is no occasion to accompany the happy trio on their voyage to England, or to mention the joy of the meeting at the vicarage. All Lucy's cares, anxieties, and sufferings were amply repaid by seeing Neville, in a progressive state of recovery, once more under her father's roof.

On repairing to the abode of his ancestors, Neville found his grandfather in the last stage of dotage, and even of existence. He expired a few days after his return, muttering indistinctly "saltier," and "ultimus."

Mrs. Neville with pride considered her nephew as one of the heroes of the family, although she was shocked at seeing his arm in a sling, a black patch on his head, and a countenance pale from recent suffering. With her concurrence, Coombe-Neville House and the adjoining estate were sold. From its size and state of dilapidation, the former was taken down, and some of the stone fragments of the mutilated arms of the Neville family may now be seen, alas! forming a portion of the wall of the parish-pound.

Neville and his aunt removed to a more modern residence, a few miles from the vicarage; to which place he conducted Lucy as his wife, as soon as it

was fitted for her reception. The good Abbé was present at her wedding, where he might have been seen distributing bon-bons to the village children, and listening with delight to the praises bestowed on his adopted daughter, who received the blessings of all who knew her. The Abbé resided principally with her and Neville, and expired at a good old age with the calmness and resignation of a Christian; receiving from Lucy, during a protracted illness, those cares and attentions which he had bestowed on her beloved husband.

Between the Vicar and the Abbé, a bond of friendship had been established, which no difference of religion had ever disturbed, or any controversy weakened. They were both good men, pursuing, perhaps, different roads to the same country, but both humbly hoping to arrive there at last only through the atonement of Him who died for all.

During the Abbé's occasional visits at the vicarage, Mary made up to him as much as she could for the loss of the society of her sister. He had at length the pleasure of seeing her united to Mr. Davenport, whose sound religious principles and good sense were calculated to secure her happiness. Henry became his father's curate, with the probability of succeeding ultimately to the living, thus affording the Vicar an opportunity of passing part of his time with his married daughters. Lucy

is still engaged in educating her children, and forming the happiness of her husband and of all around her.

So live the pair—and life's disasters seem
In their unruffled calm, a troubled dream;
In comfort runs the remnant of their life—
He the fond husband, she the faithful wife.

CRABBE.

The swallow knows her time,
And on the vernal breezes, wings her way
O'er mountain, plain, and far extending seas.
Before the Cuckoo's note she, twittering gay,
Skims 'long the brook, or o'er the brushwood tops.
J. GRAHAME.

AFTER many years' observation of the disappearance of Swallows in the Autumn, I have never yet noticed so many of them remaining with us so late as they have done this year (1842). The following are extracts from my journal:—

November 16. — Saw many swallows briskly hawking for flies over the play-fields at Eton. Thermometer, 45.

November 20. — Saw several swallows flying about the round tower of Windsor Castle at half-past three o'clock in the evening. The Thermometer at eight o'clock in the morning was 45. There had been much cold rain the previous day.

December 2. — Again saw several swallows, hawking busily about the round tower. Therm. 48; wind, S.S.W. Some of the men at work on the top of the Victoria tower, inform me that many swallows have been flying about it for some days past.

December 3. — Swallows still seen about Windsor Castle. I heard, this day, of a very late brood of swallows at Her Majesty's cottage, at the bottom of the slopes. Therm. 47½.

December 7. — The last swallows were seen this day. It was followed by a dense fog. Therm. 42.

December 12. — Thermometer ranged, between eight and two o'clock, from 52½ to 55½; but I could neither see nor hear of a swallow.

December 13. — Thermometer, at half-past eight, 50½.

December 14. — Butterflies seen.

December 23. — Thermometer ranged between this day and the 14th, at from 50 to 60.

December 26. — Therm., at nine o'clock, 50.

December 30. — Thermometer 55; wind, N.W. Butterflies. Heard of a Robin's nest with one egg in it. Spring flowers sent me.

December 31. — Thermometer, at half-past nine, 53.

It will appear from the above extracts that the swallows were not driven away by the cold weather, but probably by the fog, which lasted for at least twenty-four hours. It is to be wished that accounts of the arrival and disappearance of these birds were kept in different parts of Great Britain, and occasionally published in some of our natural

history journals, or provincial newspapers. Such accounts would prove very interesting.

I am indebted to the kindness of an intelligent and observant correspondent, in Lancashire, for the following remarks on the migration and reappearance of the swallow in the year 1832. He informed me that the middle and end of the month of September, in that year, were remarkable for the mildness of the weather, for bright sunshine, and abundance of the insect tribe. On the twenty-fifth of that month, which was a warm and fine day, the common swallow (hirundo rustica) was skimming about as alertly as in the middle of summer, but on the twenty-sixth it was no longer to be seen. They appeared at once to have taken their departure. The Martin (hirundo urbica) still remained in considerable numbers; and on the fourth of October many of them were seen, but only one solitary chimney swallow.

On the 7th of October the rapid fall of the barometer announced either the approach of a storm, or of some great change in the weather; although throughout the day it continued mild and placid. In the afternoon, great numbers of the common swallow were skimming and flying about, apparently in full vigour, both of health and plumage. They appeared, to use a nautical phrase, to have "put back," for on the next day the mercury dropped rapidly more and more. In the course of the

morning, a most fearful and violent tempest of wind and rain arose from the west and south-west, causing dreadful disasters on the coast, attended with considerable loss of life.

After this statement, the question may very naturally be asked, whether or not these poor birds, perceiving indications of the coming storm, when over the surface of the ocean, had returned to the coast of Lancashire in order to avoid it? This was most probably the case; and if so, it shews wonderful foresight, and instinctive knowledge of the danger they would encounter in continuing their course to distant regions. It would also be an interesting thing to ascertain, whether they were emigrants from the north of England, from Scotland, or from Ireland. If from the south of England, they might have been expected to have landed in the south rather than in Lancashire.

Not a single martin was visible amongst these swallows, nor was one seen in the neighbourhood after the fourth of October.

If the swallows returned to avoid the coming tempest, they seemed reluctant to resume their migration, as on the fifteenth of October several of them were seen, and on the twentieth of that month a pair of them were observed about a mile from Liverpool, occasionally flying about, and sometimes perched on the cornice of a house, enjoying the sunshine, apparently healthy and alert.

Another instance of the re-appearance of swallows, after their migration, was also observed at Liverpool, a few years previous to the instance already recorded. In that case their re-appearance was attended with violent gales of wind, which caused many vessels to put back into port.

It may be mentioned that the retired master of a vessel, who for many years commanded a ship trading between Liverpool and the West Indies, assured my correspondent, that when he was in the Atlantic, it has occasionally happened, particularly after strong breezes from the eastward, that considerable numbers, both of swallows and martins, had alighted on the rigging and other parts of the ship. In general they soon died, and, as was conjectured, for want of food. The vessel at the time was hundreds of miles from the continent of Africa, to which country these indefatigable emigrants were probably resorting.

I have noticed, in a former work, my having witnessed the arrival of swallows in the Spring. On that occasion they settled on the ground, and were so much exhausted that they allowed me to approach close to them. If cold weather, however, sets in after the arrival of swallows, not one is to be seen; and I have, therefore, little doubt but that they again take their departure from this country.

If this is the case, it becomes a curious subject

for enquiry — whether they re-emigrate to their former haunts, to the sunny groves of Greece or the sands of Africa, or whether they take a shorter flight, to skim over the vineyards of France or the fertile plains of Andalusia. Go, however, where there may, it is only for a short time. When the balmy and cheerful month of May arrives, and we enjoy soft breezes, and see the beauteous flowers expanding, and all Nature rejoicing in its renovated existence, then the pretty swallow reappears to gladden us again with his presence.

The migration of swallows, the places of their resort, their sudden appearance and disappearance, is still involved in much mystery. It is to be regretted that travellers in different countries have not taken more notice of the habits of these interesting birds, as to their arrival and departure. In North and South America, the East and West Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, and, in fact, in almost every part of the known world, the swallow has its stated periods of migration and reappearance. There may certainly be some exceptions. An observant naturalist has assured me that he has seen swallows in this country every month of the year except January. I have already mentioned having seen them as late as the seventh of December.

Although I have only on one occasion seen the arrival of my favourite birds, I have on several oc-

casions witnessed their departure. The large old buildings which are found in the neighbourhood of the river Thames, are much frequented by swallows and martins in the Autumn. Here they congregate in immense numbers, and also on the tops of the surrounding high trees, sometimes taking a flight as if by one consent, and then returning to the same spots again. At night they roost in countless numbers on the willows growing on the different aits or small islets on the river. Their final departure seems to depend on the state of the weather, but generally takes place towards the evening. They ascend to a considerable height, and soon afterwards not one is to be seen. That migratory birds are enabled to take their unerring flight during the night cannot be doubted. They neither require a star to guide or a moon to light them, and yet they are enabled to traverse the trackless ocean to far distant countries, till they return to enliven us again with their presence.

The sight, indeed, of the first swallow in Spring always affords me peculiar pleasure. It is impossible not to feel an interest in all the tribe. They are the harbingers of fine weather after a dreary winter; and we are cheered with their melodious song, which has something in it so congenial to our feelings of pleasure, that poets in all ages have noticed it. If we watch a pair of window swallows

building their nest, we shall hear the notes of exulting satisfaction, which the little architects utter reciprocally as their work progresses. It is, however, when the young brood requires all their care that they are seen to most advantage. The most unremitting and indefatigable exertions are undergone from morning until night, in order to procure the necessary supply of food, which is always received by the young with notes of complacency and pleasure. A very short time is allowed to elapse between each visit of one or other of the parent swallows to the nest, and then they depart

> To hawk aloft, or skim along the flood,
> To furnish their loquacious nests with food.

I am not sure, however, whether the habits of the little Sand-martin (Hirundo riparia) do not interest me more than those of the swallow. They excavate their holes in sunny sand-banks with wonderful rapidity, and dart in and out of them in a way peculiarly pleasing, and which I am never tired of watching. When the male and female are resting for a few moments in the recesses of their retreat, their gentle notes of love and affection may be heard, and then they come out to resume their rapid and "amusive" flight.

The courage of the swallow tribe, when the safety of their young is endangered by the approach of a prowling cat, or a bird of prey, is quite extraordinary. Fearless of themselves, they will

mob the intruders, till they are glad to make their escape. This propensity of the swallow is turned to good account in some of the States of America, A colonel of one of Her Majesty's battalions of foot-guards informed me of the following curious fact. During a tour he had recently made in the State of Georgia and some other parts of America, he observed, in many farm-yards, a sort of small pigeon-house, fixed on a strong post, with the necessary feeding places. These were inhabited by a colony of swallows, who were the guardians of the place, and their exertions were rewarded by a careful protection from every injury. The vultures, which abound in those parts of the country, where the colonies are met with, would commit great depredations on the poultry in the farm-yard, except for the prowess of these birds. No sooner does a vulture appear, than he is instantly attacked by the whole colony of swallows, who fly at his head with so much courage, and so unceasingly, uttering their wild screams all the time, that the marauder is glad to make a hasty retreat.

The idea that swallows hide themselves during the winter, at the bottom of rivers and lakes, is still prevalent in some parts of England. When I was on a visit at the house on the beautiful island on the Windermere Lake, I was informed, that a person in the neighbourhood of Grassmere Lake, has seen swallows emerging from it. Wish-

ing to learn the particulars as a matter of curiosity, I requested the land agent of the gentleman at whose house I was staying, to procure me all the particulars in his power. He informed me, that he knew the man who was stated to have seen the swallows — that he bore a good character for honesty and credibility — and that he was as intelligent as most persons in his sphere of life, being a working carpenter. I could not stay long enough to see the man myself, but the following statement, which I have exactly copied, was sent to me afterwards.

"I, the undersigned Thomas Wilson, house carpenter of Butter Lip Howe Cottage, in the parish of Grassmere, in the county of Westmoreland, do hereby certify, that on the 2nd of May, 1837, I saw issue from Grassmere Lake three swallows, in the following manner. I was watching the motions of a water-hen, on a small island, on Grassmere Lake, myself being on the main land; and at the distance of from thirty to forty yards from where I was standing, I saw rise from out of the water, first one swallow, and then two others, at the same time. The two about two minutes after the first, all of which flew away, apparently in a weakly manner, and low. The lake was perfectly calm, and I am so sure that they were swallows (although I cannot say the species) and that they rose out of the water, that I could freely

take my oath of both the above facts. As witness my hand, this 14th day of October, 1837.

THOMAS WILSON."

I may mention, that the agent informed me, that he went with the man to see the spot. He pointed out the place where he said the birds rose, which was about five feet from the island where the water was deeper than between the island and the shore. The island was merely a boggy piece of ground, and is barely above the surface of the water.

I have given this account as I received it, and must leave it to others to form their own opinions respecting it. One thing is certain, that the notion of the emersion of swallows is still very prevalent.

In the Harleian Miscellany, a curious supposition is brought forward, of swallows taking a flight to the moon, or some invisible aerial island, fixed above our atmosphere; shewing how speculative the opinions were respecting their annual destination.

April 2nd, 1843. The first swallows were seen flying over the river Thames, and about the meadow, called the Brocas, near Eton Bridge. On the 9th, 10th, and 11th of that month, there was snow and frost, with very cold nights. On the 13th it was still colder, the thermometer being at eight o'clock in the morning only 33½. Not a

swallow was to be seen, nor could I hear of any; it is, therefore probable, that those which arrived on the 2nd, had re-migrated. On the 15th, I heard of the first nightingale, and saw one myself on the 19th. Still few swallows were to be seen. On the 17th, the weather continued cold, with N. E. winds, and I could not see any swallows in their usual haunts, although I occasionally heard of them in different localities. No swallows had been seen near Dartford, in Kent, on the 20th, but a pair was observed on the 21st.

These facts will serve to shew the time of the arrival of these welcome birds. Their departure is more irregular still, as may be seen from the following remarks which I made in the next autumn.

October 13th, 1843. Thermometer 40. — Cold and frosty. Many swallows seen, flying low, or skimming along the streets of Windsor and the adjacent roads.

October 20. — A severe frost, which destroyed dahlias, &c., yet I saw many swallows, and at least fifty flying about a house at Wimbledon. Thermometer at eight o'clock in the morning was 36.

October 22. — Weather cold, yet many swallows seen.

November 1. — No swallows to be seen.

November 13. — Saw one swallow this morning, hawking for flies busily close to the ground,

over a grass plot. Thermometer 30, at eight o'clock in the morning, ice, but a sunny day.

November 25. — Two swallows flying about the round tower of Windsor Castle. Mild day.

These were the last swallows I observed.

It is only by the united observations of various persons, that we must expect to learn many curious facts in Natural history of which we are still ignorant.

ANON.

THAT the destruction of sparrows, and small birds generally, is very injurious to those who have gardens and orchards I am strongly induced to believe. A proof of this has been sent to me by a correspondent, to whom I am indebted for much interesting information. He informs me that attached to his garden, is a fruit plantation of three acres, containing gooseberries, currants, raspberries, cherries, apples, pears, plums, &c., and that he never allows birds to be destroyed or their nests taken. The consequence is that he is never annoyed with caterpillars. He adds, that about two miles distance from his residence, there is "a small bird club," the members of which are bound to produce a certain number of small birds every week. Each year the caterpillars devastate the plantations, and last year an apple-orchard of more than ten acres was so infested, that the owner employed women to pick off every blossom in order to save the trees. It is hoped that a knowledge of this fact will induce persons to discontinue the wanton

destruction of small birds, intended, as they have been for the benefit of man.*

From information communicated to me, I have reason to be more convinced than ever, that both Herrings and Mackerel only perform partial mi-

* A friend, (the Rev. J. Mitford) whose opinion is at variance with that advanced in the text, on the question as to whether some of the smaller birds are useful or injurious to fruit-trees and vegetables, has sent me some twigs of the cherry, gooseberry, and Pyrus japonica, in which the blossom-buds, he says, are entirely eaten out by the Bullfinch; and he adds, that all the buds in one large bush of P. japonica in his garden are destroyed by them. His gardener, who is a very experienced and observant person, informs him, that he has seldom seen any birds but the Black Titmouse, in Autumn, feeding on caterpillars; even the Robin seldom, who prefers earth-worms and earwigs. His gardener has given the names of the birds that he considers the most destructive to the garden crops, and the particular nature of the mischief they do.

The Bullfinch.—All buds, cherry, gooseberry; after these, the apple.

The House-Sparrow.—Gooseberry buds, and peas.

Chaffinch.—All vegetable seeds, as they come up in the Spring.

Linnet.—All seeds ripening in the Autumn, especially spinach and beet.

Hedge-Sparrow.—Draws out of the ground young onions and leeks.

Thrushes and Blackbirds.—Ripe fruit of all kinds.

Norf. Nightingale.—Cherries, raspberries, &c. when ripe.

The Jay.—Strips off whole rows of ripe peas, and beans.

These observations were made in a garden in the eastern side of Suffolk, and are here stated, as they differ from the opinion given in the Text, that their truth may be examined and verified, in other quarters.

grations, either for the purpose of depositing their spawn, or in search of food. In fact they may almost always be found where food is abundant, feeding on the lower grounds in winter, and removing to the upper grounds in summer.

Fresh water Fish in salt water, and salt-water fish in fresh water, living, breeding and thriving, have been seen in various places in Scotland; and also in a pond in Guernsey, which has been recovered from the sea by draining the neck of a narrow isthmus.

In a former work, I have given some account of a large Spider, found at Hampton Court, there called "the Cardinal." They are so large that when one was put into a tumbler, the legs reached over the edge of it. They are very swift in their motions, and hunt about for their food. They bite off the wings of moths, and unlike the common spiders, which suck the juices of their prey, they appear to eat the body. They may be heard distinctly when they run along the paper on the walls. They are always found in pairs — at least if one is caught, another is sure to be seen directly afterwards. They are most frequently seen in Au'umn.*

* It is a general remark at Hampton Court, that the Cardinal spider makes its appearance previous to wet weather.

I am glad to find that the fact I have formerly mentioned of the Long Tailed Titmouse, or Bottle Tit, placing a feather occasionally across the entrance to the nest, has been corroborated by others. This feather is beautifully placed, probably for the purpose of adding to the warmth of the nest, and pretty firmly fixed amongst the lichens, webs and wool of which the nest is composed. The nest, which is a sort of ball, and lined inside with an amazing quantity of feathers, will sometimes contain from ten to fifteen young ones. It is somewhat elastic, and the labour bestowed upon it must be prodigious. I know nothing in the architecture of birds so really interesting and beautiful. The hole is so small, that it appears scarcely large enough to admit the old birds, and it is over this hole that the feather is placed, like a swinging door.

So sagacious are animals, that the cattle in Australia are never known to feed beyond that point in the prairies, which will enable them to get down in the evening to their drinking places. The Shetland and Orkney Cows, and even the ponies, observe a strict regularity in coming down to the shore, as soon as the tide is out, in order to feed on the sea-weed, moving off as the tide comes in, and repeating the same thing both night and day punctually.

It is a curious fact, that a gentleman in Wiltshire, who is a strict preserver of his game and fish, has his ponds regularly visited by Herons on a Sunday, not a Heron is to be seen near them on any other day.

Shrew Mice feed upon frogs, and attack them with great energy.

Vast numbers of Frogs were found dead this Summer (1843), by the side of a pond near Ascot Heath. I heard of the fact too late to be able to procure any of them for the purpose of ascertaining the cause of their death.

The Rev. Gilbert White in his MS. memoranda says, "A colony of black Ants comes forth every Midsummer from under my staircase, which stands in the middle of my house; and as soon as the males and females (which fill all the windows and rooms) are flown away, the workers retire under the stairs and are seen no more. It does not appear how this nest can have any communication with the garden and yard; and if not, how can these ants subsist in perpetual darkness and confinement?"

The dark colour of many wild birds must be a great preservation to them. The young of many

others do not have their full gay plumage till their second and third year,—in fact till they are strong enough to take care of themselves.

The shelled Snail is protected from cold by its outer covering. I have observed that frost has but little effect on the Slug, as I have never seen any killed by it, although harbouring amongst the leaves of frozen cabbages, and under bricks and stones. Soft billed birds search for them in severe weather. The slimy covering of slugs must be a great protection to them. Every thing is cared for.

Those animals whose movements are slow and sluggish, have proportionably short distances to pass over. In such cases it will be found that their food is almost always before them.

"Farmers say, that when Chaffers abound, they fall from the trees and hedges on the sheep's backs, where, being entangled in the wool, they die, and being blown by flies, fill the sheep with maggots."* (A useful hint for shepherds).

Some Cape Geese, in Richmond Park, laid their eggs on the ground for two or three years, but finding that the rats destroyed them, they made

* Rev. Gilbert White's MSS.

their nests in some old pollards near the water, to which they safely conveyed their young. Moorhens, probably for the same reason, will frequently fix their nests in an ingenious manner amongst tall rushes.

During this very mild winter (Dec. 1843), I observe the Rooks haunt their old nests in the Home Park, Windsor, as if preparing for the breeding season. In Mr. White's unpublished MSS., he mentions a rook's nest, with young ones in it, as early as the 26th of November; and states, that on the 6th of December, one of the young was found dead under the nest, about half grown.

Wood-lice may be found all the winter through, in mild weather, and earth-worms, also, after it is dark. Some kinds of Gnats play much about during a soft winter's evening.

As a counterpoise to the great multiplicity of insects, numerous birds feed on and prevent the injury which they would otherwise occasion. There is no cruelty in this. The moment a bird swallows a fly, its life is extinct without probably a *pang* being inflicted.

Hornets fly about on a moon-light night in Autumn. They have flown into my room late in

the evening, attracted by the light. They, probably, are in search of moths.

I can fancy that *winged* insects enjoy a certain degree of happiness. They certainly shew much vivacity and activity, and this, perhaps, is the best proof that their existence is attended with pleasure. They have also but little care in searching for food.

Mr. White mentions a notion of the country people about Selborne, that there is a species of the *genus mustelinum*, besides the weazel, stoat, and polecat, which they describe as a little reddish animal, not much bigger than a field mouse, but much longer, which they call a *cane*. I am assured, that this is by no means an uncommon animal in some parts of Berkshire.*

A friend of mine put a Newt (Salamandra aquatica?) into some brandy, and it lived ten minutes. Leeches are lively after being repeatedly frozen. Newts, lizards, and some other amphibia are pro-

* Mr. Yarrell kindly informs me, that the term "*cane*" is a provincial name for the female of the common weazel, which is usually one-fourth smaller than the male. Young females of the year, frequently seen during harvest, are not much longer in the body than a full-sized field-mouse.

vided with lungs, and, therefore, capable of uttering sounds, but they are perfectly mute.

"If Field-fares come, as people say they do, 'ventis vehementer spirantibus,' they have no advantage of that kind, for the Autumn (1776) has been remarkably still." *

The ardour of affection of animals for their young generally only lasts till they are able to take care of themselves. There are, however, exceptions. When the purposes of nature are fulfilled, the tie is dissolved, and neither parents nor offspring appear to recognize each other afterwards.

Mr. White remarks, that all quadrupeds that prey on fish are amphibious. This is not the case. Dogs, in Greenland, feed on fish, and watch for it on the sea-coast. The Polar bear, also, dives after fish, and yet cannot be called an amphibious animal. The distinction seems to be this. "The otter, seal, &c. have a remarkable deposition in the eye, through which they are enabled to elongate or shorten the axis of the organ at pleasure, and by that means to see equally well in two media of very different density, viz. water and air." I am indebted to Blumenbach for the latter observation.

* Mr. White's MSS.

I am always pleased with anecdotes of the affection of animals towards each other. A gentleman in Scotland, had a cock golden Pheasant sent him, which he confined in a pen with a solitary chicken, he happened to have. These birds formed a great affection for each other, which they shewed in a variety of ways. The pheasant, however, died, and was immediately stuffed, and the chicken turned loose. It appeared miserable, however, after the death of its companion, and having been shewn it in its stuffed state, it drooped its wings, after having attempted to get at it, kept its eyes fixed on it, and in this attitude died.

The plants which decorate our fields and gardens, the animals which haunt our woods, the various minerals of the earth, the innumerable meteors of the sky, are all calculated to store our minds with an inexhaustible variety of instruction, and tend to the development of moral and religious truths. Nature, indeed, is always offering some striking facts for contemplation and wonder.

When the celebrated Edmund Burke had retired from the turmoil of politics, his chief pleasure was in the cultivation of his garden and small farm, near Beaconsfield. Here he was occasionally visited by some of his former friends, who consulted him on affairs relating to the state of the country. One of these politicians found him in one of his

fields, apparently in deep thought, and looking at something in his hand. He addressed Mr. Burke, who made him no reply. After again speaking to him, he said, "You do not hear me, Mr. Burke." "I was admiring," said Burke, "the curious structure of this grashopper. See how wonderfully it is formed, what strength and activity has been bestowed upon it." His friend, not being much interested in the structure of an insect, went on to tell Mr. Burke of some important occurrence in the political world. Mr. Burke was, however, evidently abstracted, and paid no attention to what he was saying. At last he burst forth, while he looked at the insect in his hand, into a beautiful illustration of the moral and religious truths to be derived from a contemplation of the wisdom of the Creator in the works of creation. Mr. Burke's great mind did not disdain to receive instruction from one of the chirping grashoppers of his field.

We always hail with peculiar pleasure the first appearance of Crocusses and Snow-drops after a hard winter. Mrs. Tighe's description of the snow-drop is very pretty.

The snow-drop,—
Whiter than the snow it blooms among,
Droops its fair head, submissive to the power
Of every angry blast which sweeps along,
Sparing the lovely trembler.

I think that I have found out a reason why the eggs of the Guinea-fowl are so much harder than the eggs of any other birds of the gallinaceous tribe. The guinea-fowl is found in large quantities in Upper and Lower Guinea, where snakes abound, and, probably other animals, who would destroy their eggs. These are laid on the ground, and in unusual numbers. The shells of the eggs are so hard, that snakes cannot easily break them. They, probably, carry a few away, but there are so many of them, that this circumstance cannot materially lessen the numbers of these useful birds. The guinea-fowl, also, is peculiarly cautious in concealing its nest, which is made in the thickest bushes or tufts of grass, having generally two runs or passages to it. This is a foresight given to the birds which must be the means of preserving the eggs, as well as themselves, from predatory animals; so considerate is Nature.

At the great fair, at Novgorod, in Russia, many Kirguis horses are brought for sale. The Marquis de Custine, who was there at the time, says, that these animals shew the greatest affection for each other. As long as they remain together they are quiet, but when one of them is sold, he has to be cast, and forcibly dragged, with cords, out of the enclosure, where he is confined. His companions then never cease to endeavour to escape. They

neigh piteously, and shew signs of anger, as well as of great sensibility. "I have seldom," he adds, "been more affected than I was yesterday, by the sight of these unhappy creatures, torn from the freedom of the Desert, and violently separated from those they love."

Our resident in Scinde informed me, that few sights are more splendid than seeing the vast expanse of waters formed by the river Indus, as it flows through Scinde, nearly covered with the Lotus.* The flower of this aquatic plant is gorgeously beautiful, and the effect it must produce over an extent of many miles, must be very fine.

There is an Alder, growing on the banks of the river Mole, at East Moulsey, Surrey, having a girt of twelve feet. The stem is 45 feet in height, and contains 135 feet of timber besides what is in the large branches. The tree is perfectly sound and thriving, and is the largest of the sort I have yet seen or heard of.

The fact of Snakes being found in the sea, away from land, has been confirmed to me by an officer of Her Majesty's navy, who, in his surveys among

* "Nymphæa pubescens;" or, Indian Lotus, figured in the Botanist's Repository.

the Greek Islands and the Dardanelles, has observed them swimming in the sea.

Squirrels will catch and devour small birds.

The word "Hever," as applied to deer, is most probably derived from the Welch word *Hyfr*, signifying a splayed goat. Pennant, in his British Zoology, (ed. 1812,) article Goat, "says, "that the meat of a splayed goat of six or seven years old, which is then called *Hyfr*, is reckoned the best, and is little inferior to that of the deer." My supposition that it was probably derived from the French word "hiver," was erroneous.

When Hares are seeking their young at night, in order to suckle them, they utter a faint cry, something like the feeble bleat of a fawn, and the leverets answer it, but in a still more feeble tone.

Gold and silver fish derive their colours from the skin and not from the scales.

I am assured that Snipes are found in every known part of the habitable globe. Is this the case with any other bird?*

* Mr. Yarrell remarks, that many of the snipes so found are of species peculiar to the country they are found in. Thus, the snipes of the United States, and some of those in India, are dis-

Two Sea-Gulls, of different species, have bred together lately in an enclosure at Wentworth House, Yorkshire. The male was a black-backed gull, and the female, in the account sent to me, is called the blue-backed gull. They made their nest in an old stone quarry, (a place enclosed for the purpose of keeping birds in) formed of pieces of stick, and small dried sods. One egg only was laid, which the male and female took it by turns to sit upon. The young bird, when hatched, was covered with down, which changed to a spotted grey. The old birds began to make a second nest, but no egg had been laid in it when my account was sent. This is the only instance I have met with of gulls breeding while in a state of confinement.

Quails are found in Sutherlandshire, and it is by no means uncommon to find them in Morayshire. They are, also, occasionally found in Ireland.

We have the best evidence to prove, that Fish and molluscous animals may be frozen without destroying their vitality. A gentleman, at Camberwell, had an inflamed eye during a severe winter, and a Leech was applied to the temple several times. It was kept in water, in a vial, placed near the fire-place of the parlour, but the cold at that

tinct from the British snipes. He adds, that of our British birds, the Turnstone appears to have the widest geographical range.

time was so severe, that the leech was frozen every night, and thawed the following day. Captain Franklyn, also, mentions, that during the severe winter he experienced near the Copper-Mine river, the fish froze as they were taken out of the nets, and in a short time became a solid mass of ice. In this state, by a blow or two of the hatchet, they were easily split open. If, however, in this completely frozen state they were thawed before the fire, they recovered their animation.

In a sharp clear stream, two Eels may occasionally be observed lying one above the other, a space being between them of about two inches. They are perfectly straight and motionless, except the vibration of the fins, which appear in extraordinary agitation. They have been seen in this position for two hours at a time, but the cause I have not been able to ascertain.

The Jews, probably, are not aware of the discovery of Leuwenhoek, that Eels have scales, or they would, no doubt, eat them. At present they do not form one of their articles of food, as they were commanded to eat of no fish that has not scales. These appear as minute as their roes.

A large quantity of Eels have been observed in one of the Cumberland lakes, to form a circle

round a shoal of small fish, in shallow water, and, after driving them to the shore, they readily caught and fed upon them. I have observed the same thing take place in the canal in Hampton Court Park.

The two largest Oak trees I can hear of, that have been purchased by the late Navy Board, contained the following enormous quantity of timber: —The first measured, without the bark, 1448 feet, and contained 36 loads 28 feet of timber. The second measured 2426 feet, or 48 loads 26 feet of timber, and was sold for nearly £700, and the bark for £200.

Hedge-Sparrows have been known to hatch three times in one season. They begin to build very early in the year.

The hen Robin is certainly gifted with song, although it is not so powerful as that of the male bird.

The Missel Thrush, while on its flight, may be often heard to make a chuckling sort of noise very similar to that of the Fieldfare. If these latter birds are disturbed from a tree, each of them will make this noise, and continue it at intervals, probably as a warning call to their companions.

A pair of Song Thrushes made their nest in a bush, and while the hen-bird was sitting, the cock constructed another in an adjoining evergreen, about six feet distance from the first. Soon after the hen had hatched her eggs, she began laying others in the fresh nest, and the care of rearing the young birds entirely devolved on the male. Both broods were brought up. This, I believe, is a very unusual circumstance.

It is an interesting fact, that those quadrupeds which feed on grass do not pair. The reason is obvious. While the female feeds herself, she suckles her young. Birds pair, because the labour of providing food for the young could not be performed by the female only. The assiduity, attention, mutual affection, gieat vigilance and patience of pairing animals is quite extraordinary, and has been implanted for the well-being of their offspring.

Captain Fitzroy, in his voyage in the Beagle, mentions having seen Ostriches swim across a somewhat rapid river. This they must have done from choice, as they had neither been hunted or driven.

I have been twice to hear the Singing Mouse. Its song is plaintive, sweet, and continuous, and evidently proceeds from the throat. The notes

are those of the canary bird; and on questioning the owner, I found that one of these birds had been kept in the room in which the mouse was trapped.

A nobleman, who had a house in the Isle of Wight, had a young Spaniel of King Charles's breed, which he wished to take to his seat in Lincolnshire. The dog was accordingly conveyed in the steam-boat to Southampton, and from thence in his Lordship's carriage, through London, into Lincolnshire. On arriving there, the dog appeared to be uneasy, and was soon afterwards missed. He found his way back, however, to the Isle of Wight, where he was born, and which he had never previously quitted. The instinct which enabled him to find his way back so great a distance, and to cross the sea, is not a little extraordinary.

On the 9th, 10th, and 11th days of April, 1837, a friend of mine, then residing at Hastings, observed several fish floating on the surface of the water, and men and boys wading in and pulling them out, the Fish apparently making no effort to escape. On enquiry, he found that they were all Gurnards, no other fish exhibiting this phenomenon at that time, although he was informed that

a few years before, some conger eels were, during severe weather, in the same predicament.

Some of the fishermen attributed the helplessness of the gurnards to the circumstance of their having been blinded by the cold. Others said, the fish mistook the flakes of snow, which fell on the surface of the sea, for insects, and that they, by leaping up so constantly and eagerly, for the purpose of catching them, at last "blew themselves:" meaning that they so distended the air bladder, that it lost its elasticity or power of contraction, and thus they became helpless. On inspecting a fish just caught, the eyes were perfect, but upon opening the abdomen, and removing the air bladder, the latter was found extremely distended.

It is probable that the gurnards came into shallow water in search of food, and the shallow water being much colder than the deep water, the fish became so benumbed, that when they had once distended the air-bladder to mount to the surface, the muscles had not power to compress it, and hence they could not sink and make off. It is, however, a curious subject for enquiry.

Starlings and Lapwings congregate early, the latter about the first week in October. Birds, in their flights, are joined by others, and thus large flocks are seen together. Their number is, pro-

bably, determined by the supply of food required.

Sometimes while riding in the fields in Autumn, I am covered with those fine spider's threads, which are called *gossamer*. They descend from a great height in the air, and some of the threads are very long. The Spider must be very buoyant, and have an extraordinary power of ascension. Chaucer, speaking of gossamer as a strange phenomenon, says —

> As sore some wonder at the cause of thunder,
> On ebbe, and flode, on *gossomor*, and mist;
> And on all thing, 'till the cause is wist.

It is both curious and interesting to watch the flight of Kites and Buzzards, as they sail round in circles, with wings expanded and quite motionless. A friend of mine informed me, that he had frequently watched the flight of the Vultures (Vultur aura) both in Africa and the West Indies, where, as in all tropical countries, they abound, and are invaluable. These birds soar at very great heights, — at one moment they seem stationary, and at another sweep round in large circles, without the slightest visible motion of the wings, the wind at the time blowing steadily from one point. How are these circles completed *against* the wind without perceptible muscular exertion?

Large flocks of Starlings roost among willows and alders, growing by the sides of ponds and rivers. They spend the twilight in making a prodigious noise and chattering, with occasional short flights backwards and forwards. The flights of these birds are very curious. When a flock of them is viewed from a distance, with the sun reflected on their wings, they appear and disappear as they turn to the left or right, according to the gleams of light.

Linnets whistle inwardly as they sit in flocks, and so, I think, do Starlings.

A Gold Fish, in a small fountain, in the grounds of a gentleman of my acquaintance, swam about for more than two months with its belly upwards. It appeared perfectly healthy and lively. This change from the natural position of the fish was probably, owing to an enlargement or defect in the air-bladder.

Keepers have informed me that Weazles will sometimes kill and feed on Snakes.

Efts, or water Lizards, will feed greedily upon Tadpoles.

Birds resume their song at the earliest period

of warm weather in the Spring, as if they hailed the return of the season of hilarity and cheerfulness. At this time we rejoice to hear —

> Birds in cheerful notes expressing
> Nature's bounty and their blessing.

The study of nature and a habit of observation refines our feelings. It is a source of interesting amusement and excitement, prevents idle or vicious propensities, and exalts the mind to a love of virtue, and a more intimate knowledge of the goodness of the great Creator.

It has always been a source of regret to me that I have been unable to combine with my observations of the works of nature, such anatomical or physiological hints connected with them, as might prove useful in the elucidation of many facts, of which we are still ignorant. In the present day, the most novel and useful task, perhaps, that an observer could undertake, would be to explore the relations between the habits of animals and their internal structure, with an especial view to the state of their organs, as compared with the wants, attachments, enjoyments, and mode of life pursued by the animals. In birds, for instance, such considerations would lead to an explanation of their pairing, migrations, and habitations. It is probable, also, that such an enquiry might not only illustrate the mutual dependence of different classes of the animal scale, but even shew us the way to the uses of certain parts, which, to our limited knowledge, appear at present either nugatory or hurtful.

I have thought that one of the most curious and striking examples of the adaptation of means to ends, all tending to the good of man, might be found in the food of birds. This, I presume, is very well known in the common species — as the Corvidæ — though I am not aware that the food of the migratory species has been sufficiently attended to. Has any one examined the stomach of young Cuckoos, and that of their foster-dams? Has any one shewn why the old cuckoo cannot or will not feed her offspring? Would not a higher animal than the cuckoo, nay, even the human animal, quit her young if the means of supporting and nurturing it were utterly to fail? Yet the conduct of the cuckoo, that "rude bird of hate," as Milton calls it, is still a mystery, and will be so, till anatomical inquiries are pursued in connection with the habits of animals. The hybernation of animals is another subject of very curious import, connected, as it is, with deep questions in physiology, and remarkably interesting in relation to food and climate.

That the peculiar food of some animals is made subservient to the benefit of man, and that digestion does not always destroy its vivifying principle, cannot admit of a doubt. For instance, many birds feed on the spawn of fishes, and this will account for fish being found in great variety, in lakes and pools on the tops of mountains and

hills, far removed from rivers.* Many seeds also vegetate after having passed through the stomachs of birds, as well as of quadrupeds.

I have been induced to make these desultory remarks, in the hope that some one, having more time and ability than myself, will pursue those enquiries which may serve to elucidate facts in natural history, thus enriching science, and adding to the stock of useful information. Indeed, the study of nature will afford an inexhaustible source of pleasure, affording innocent and virtuous amusement, and occupying usefully, as well as agreeably, that time which God has allotted to us, — time that foolish persons waste, but which a dying man would give worlds to command.

The lactation by the crop in Pigeons is one of the most curious phenomena in the animal economy, and is deserving of much more attention than has been hitherto paid to it by naturalists, with the exception of the celebrated John Hunter. It will probably be found that the crop is gradually thickened, and the glands enlarged, during the period of incubation in most birds, just as the milk glands are prepared during gestation in mammalia;

* Persons who have resided much in the East Indies are perfectly aware of the fact, that ponds having no communication with rivers, and which have become perfectly dry and sandy in the hot season, have had fish in them after the periodical rains. This fact can first be accounted for by the supposition that birds have conveyed the spawn of fish to them.

and that the curdy substance, or milky secretion of pigeons, may also be found in the crops of many other birds, such as the parrot, trogon, heron, rook, &c. The remarkable thing in the pigeon is, that the secretion is quite as abundant in the male as it is in the female; and a friend of mine discovered that the process was going on in the male after it had ceased in the female. This is a striking provision of nature, as when the female, having hatched, goes to nest again, which she will sometimes do before the young are half grown, the feeding of them devolves on the male, who also supplies nourishment to his mate during the latter period of incubation, when she sits close or hard, as it is called. If, from any cause, the eggs do not produce young birds, the breeders of fancy pigeons take care to give the female an opportunity of getting rid of her secretion, by allowing her to feed other young pigeons, or, as their phrase is, feeding off her soft meat to keep her in good health. In both sexes this secretion serves the purpose of a macerating solution to soften dry corn, or other hard substances, collected as food. The curd-like appearance of this secretion in the crop, is, perhaps, effected by the action of the gastric fluid, the orifices for the passage of which open into the œsophagus, immediately below the cavity forming the crop.

A similar lactation in the female Crocodile is

said to have been discovered, and described by a French naturalist;* and it is by no means improbable that such will be found to be the case with other amphibia. It is a subject to which I would urge the attention of some of our English observers; as I believe nothing has yet been added by them to Mr. Hunter's facts. In the last edition of his paper on this subject, there is not even a suggestion by the editor, and Mr. Owen is equally vague in the article "Aves" Cyclopædia of Anatomy, as he gives simply a passing quotation, and a reference to Mr. Hunter's work.

The fluid, or curdy matter, has never, I believe, been carefully examined. Its chemical characters and ultimate structure would furnish an interesting subject for enquiry, and should be subjected to a miscroscopical examination, during the progressive changes in the crops both of male and female. The lining membrane of the crops should also be microscopically examined, for if the secretion differs, it is most probable that the membrane does also.

Since writing the above, I have been informed by my intelligent friend, Mr. Gulliver, that a process like that which takes place in the crop of

* The observations respecting the ingluvial milk of crocodiles are to be found in a work published in 1809, by Descourtilz, entitled "Voyages," page 56.

pigeons has been discovered in the female Crocodile. If the fact be correctly stated, it is well worthy of further enquiry, because it may possibly turn out to be common to other reptiles, and accordingly explain some of the habits of these curious beings, which have hitherto puzzled all naturalists. For instance, some anatomist should examine the structure of the stomach and gullet of the breeding viper, and tell us whether it be really nothing more than for the purpose of hiding, and protection from injury, that the young of this reptile is wont to take refuge in the throat of the dam? At all events, until Mr. Hunter's observations on the pigeon, it was always supposed that nothing like lactation was known except among warm-blooded quadrupeds. He has shewn that the old popular saying about "pigeon's milk," which was a sort of April fool's errand, had some foundation for it, and proves that a degree of truth generally lurks in the adages of our ancestors. It may also possibly turn out, that whatever horror people have of "crocodile's tears," it may, perhaps, be ascertained that this detested reptile secretes the bland milk for its tender young. At all events, if it really be a fact, it is one singularly curious and interesting.

Those who may feel inclined to enter more fully into this subject are referred to Tiedemann (Anatomie und Natur. der Vögel, 1808), Meckel (Ver-

gleich Anat. art. Verd. der Vogel), also to Gmelin and Neergaard (Vergleich, Anat. und Physiol., 1806). The German writers, however, seem to have been ignorant of Hunter's observations, and to have added nothing to the facts recorded by our countryman.

Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air
Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee?

MILTON.

THE more we search into the arrngements of Providence, with a view of ascertaining the reason why certain objects were created, and why they are found in certain localities and not in others, the more cause we shall find to admire the wisdom and goodness of the Great Creator. The adaptation, also, of various animals, fruits, and vegetables, to peculiar climates and soils, all of them necessary to the comfort and well-being of man, is not a little extraordinary. If we look at the construction of the camel, we shall find it capable of supplying the place of the cow and the sheep, as regards food and clothing, to the wild Arab of the Desert. The goat is of the same use in another district; while the Laplander is equally benefitted by the rein-deer. Wheat, that hardy plant, which retains its vital power through a long succession of ages, and is so necessary to man, will flourish in almost any climate, and in every country. I have now some in my possession, the produce of

a grain of wheat found in an Egyptian mummy. Those who have been in hot countries, speak with delight of the refreshing juice of the water-melon and other indigenous fruits, while bread, milk, and even a sort of butter are found on or in trees in other climates, as if prepared expressly to supply mankind with these necessary articles of food. We have wool, flax, cotton, and silk, for clothing; and, in the coldest countries, we find furs of the warmest kind, which are used for the same purpose. We have fuel provided in the greatest abundance, the clearest springs to quench our thirst, and various kinds of food to sustain us. That noble animal, the horse, has been created for our use and enjoyment. The cow yields us milk and butter; the ox labours for us; and the flowers of the field, and the little birds of the air, add to our gratification and pleasure.

It would be an endless task to endeavour to enumerate all the benefits bestowed by a bountiful Creator on man, in the various countries of the world. Man seizes upon these gifts as his right, little mindful of the gratitude he owes to the Giver. He fells the noblest trees of the forest to build his ships — he digs into the earth for iron to accelerate his passage from one place to another — his comprehensive and enquiring mind brings to light the power of steam, and thus he is enabled to make conquests and discoveries, and to draw

countries, once far distant, to a nearer and nearer approach to his own. While thus engaged in his own projects after wealth or power, he forgets that he is an agent in the hands of Him, who made all, and rules over all, and who guides this intellectual power of man, in order to fulfil His own designs and purposes.

The effects of steam in promoting the civilization of the world, and the dissemination of religious knowledge, must be great. Whenever steam can be generated by matter more condensed than what is at present employed for that purpose, or when coal is found in intermediate stations, as it probably will be, the remotest countries will change their relative positions, and the intercourse of nations will be frequent and influential.

This intercourse, also, cannot fail, by intermarriages and other causes, to destroy the clanship of nations. The bigotry of the Mahomedan, the idolatry of the Chinese, and the false religion of the Hindoos, may all disappear before the spread of Christianity and civilization, and the intermixture of one people with another. Far removed as these events may now appear, and improbable as they may be thought, it is impossible for any reflecting mind not to see that an extraordinary revolution is now going on, which it is probable may change the whole relative position of this world, and pave

the way to the knowledge of the truth of revelation.

How much then does it become the duty of every one, however feeble his endeavours may be, to do all in his power to promote the furtherance of religion both by his precept and example. We must all of us, sooner or later, quit this scene of life and enter upon another. When that period arrives, happy will it be for those, who having wisely separated themselves from the pride, vanity, folly and allurements of the world, have enjoyed the pleasure of obeying their Maker, and done their best to promote the well-being and happiness of their fellow-creatures.

The remarks I have been making on the arrangements of Providence for the benefit of His creatures is beautifully illustrated by the following fact. In the vast prairies of the Texas, a little plant may always be found, which under all circumstances of climate, change of weather, rain, frost or sunshine, invariably turns its leaves and flowers to the north. Let us fancy a solitary traveller making his way over one of these trackless prairies to some far distant spot. He has no star to guide, no compass to direct him, but he finds the latter in a humble plant, and he pursues his way certain that it will not mislead him. This fact affords another proof, not only of the goodness of a benevolent Creator, but that the mechanical and

other discoveries of man, have not only been forestalled, but may probably all be found in the works of Nature. It is, indeed, a fundamental truth, one which cannot be controverted, and which must be apparent to every one who will take the trouble to reflect on the subject, that the Great Creator has stamped a proof of his existence, power and love, on all the works of his hand. We may see it in the smallest flower and insect, in the gummy covering of a bud, in the secretions of a bee from which the wax is made, in the light which has been afforded us, the heat which warms us, in the air we breathe, and in the food which has been so abundantly provided for us. But when we survey the heavens, consider the earth, the seas, and all they contain, wilfully blind must he be, who does not perceive the existence of a powerful, wise and benevolent Creator.

Those who are in the habit of endeavouring to find out the cause, for which the most apparently trifling thing has been made, will often be gratified by discoveries which are very interesting. For instance, every one has seen two horny excrescences below the hocks of horses, without probably being aware of the purpose they were intended to answer. They may possibly be thought by some persons to be useless, but this is not the case. When the foal is in the womb of the mare, the two hind legs are glued, as it were, together,

and this prevents its struggling and hurting the dam. When the foal is born, the separation of the legs takes place, but the horny substance remains on the legs. In a wild state, when the mares probably gallop much about to escape from danger, this junction of the hind legs of the foal may become still more necessary.

Those birds whose food consists of honey extracted from flowers, have the tongue *pencilled* at the tip with hairs, to which the honey adheres, and which would not be the case if it was smooth. Mr. Backhouse, in his interesting account of Australia, mentions that the eye of the Great Night Jar *(Caprimulgus gracilis)* is wonderfully adapted for enabling the bird to see those insects in the dark on which it feeds. The eye is large and stretched by a bony ring of one piece, and when recently removed, it forms a fine camera-obscura, transmitting the images of objects facing it through the integuments at the back of the retina.

The heart is hard in nature ———
——————— that is not pleas'd
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.

WOMEN are supposed to be more loquacious than men, but in the case of the animal creation this is not so, and we shall find that the distinction has been made by a benevolent Creator for a good and wise purpose. The female of almost all birds is invariably silent or at least monotonous. If she was tempted to sing during the progress of incubation, or while rearing her young, her retreat might be more readily discovered.* The cock-bird on the contrary warbles sweetly from some distant spot, cheering his partner by his well-known notes, and teaching his young to learn his delightful music. It is always pleasing to reflect on the variety of ways Nature takes to preserve the lives of her creatures, or to keep up a due proportion of each. This is done in some cases by a profusion of animal life, and in others by an instillation of peculiar art, cunning, and circum-

* Even if disturbed she steals off her nest in the most silent way possible, and without uttering a single note either of alarm or surprize.

spection. Sometimes the male warns the female by a particular cry of approaching danger, or defends her with the greatest courage. Those creatures which multiply in abundance have a proportionate number of enemies, whilst the lion and the eagle have little to fear except from man. These are able to defend themselves, but timid animals make use of evasion, and a variety of means to ward off impending danger. Fear is therefore implanted in them, and is a great preservative. The lofty forest tree, the unsightly heap of nettles, or the common bramble, are places to which a feeble bird may retreat, when apprehensive of an attack being made upon it.

Some animals under unusual or peculiar circumstances, seem to lose the power of self-preservation. Numerous instances have occurred of hares being overtaken, or met on a railroad by engines, and becoming so completely paralyzed with fear, as to make no attempt whatever to avoid the coming danger. This they might easily have done by running to the right or left. Instead of which they have waited till the noisy and rapid machine was close upon them, when they have given one convulsive spring, and have thus been caught in the scoop under the engine. The same thing has happened with respect to partridges, and in one instance as many as five of these birds were knocked down at the same time by an engine,

and afterwards picked up by a person sent for that purpose from one of the adjoining stations. When trains have been passing along the fine viaduct over the Thames at Maidenhead, rooks have flown against them, as if the power of self-preservation had abandoned these otherwise crafty birds, or rather as if they had lost the faculty which would have enabled them so easily to have avoided the danger. The same thing has happened with pheasants, and one is now alive at Steventon, which flew into one of the windows of a first class carriage, and was taken.

The following extraordinary circumstance lately occurred on a railway, and it proves not only that pigs are sensible animals, but that they are possessed with a certain degree of reflection, presence of mind, and nerve. One morning fifteen young pigs broke out of a field, and got upon the railway, and were between two of the rails, when a train approached with all its appalling accompaniments of noise, fire and smoke. The pigs were seen, but too late to stop the engine, and their owner, who happened to be on his farm, expected to have seen them all killed. They remained, however, in line, and stood perfectly still till the train had passed over them, and not one was hurt. They appeared to be sensible of the escape they had had, by running back to the field squeaking and capering with satisfaction.

When the cries of animals in distress are heard, it seems to excite the sympathy of others of their own species. Birds have been known to feed the young of those whose parents have been destroyed, and swallows, sparrows, rooks and other gregarious birds will join together in defending their young from predatory birds and animals. I lately, however, was informed of an anecdote, which places the kindly disposition of a dog in an interesting light.

A servant had thrown a litter of new-born kittens into a tub of soapy water, which stood in the yard of his master's house in order to drown them. A fine Newfoundland bitch happened to witness it, and, watching her opportunity, took each of the kittens out of the water, and conveyed them to her kennel, where she was seen endeavouring to foster and reanimate them. She had no milk to give them. If she had had, the act would not, perhaps, have been so extraordinary. It must, therefore, have arisen, from an innate benevolence of disposition, thus exemplifying the beautiful precept of shewing kindness to each other. Indeed, during our passage through this life, we can seldom be better employed than in endeavouring to alleviate misery, and in fostering those feelings of love and good-will which we are all enjoined to shew to those around us. Much may be done towards softening the sufferings of

others, even when we have little to offer beyond our sympathy, and this will often be more appreciated by the unfortunate than any pecuniary assistance. If we can shew kindness when it is most needed—if we visit some forlorn, distressed, and, perhaps, forsaken being, and offer our little mite of compassion and solace, we may be enabled to afford comfort when the heart is feeling its own bitterness.

If this principle were more acted on,—if we treated all around us as our brethren,— if the inunctions so solemnly and yet so sweetly imposed upon us by our benevolent Saviour, "to love each other," were followed by us all, we might then see a happy world, because we should all be endeavouring to make others so. The study of Nature is well calculated to produce these kindly feelings. It reveals the goodness of God, not only to us, but to all the works of His hands. It elevates as well as purifies our thoughts, and thus renders us more inclined to acts of kindness and charity. We learn to view with gratitude the many delightful objects which surround us, some intended for our use, and others for our gratification, and while we contemplate the many blessings thus bestowed on us, we are best disposed to practice those precepts of benevolence, which have been laid down for our guidance.

How many eat the bitter bread
Of misery, sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty.

THOMSON.

THERE are few places which furnish so many agreeable walks and rides as the neighbourhood of Windsor. Sometimes I stroll over the uncultivated heaths, on the borders of which may be seen some solitary, low and roughly-thatched cottages, inhabited by Broom Cutters; a rude and somewhat savage race of beings, discontented with the various enclosures which have taken place in their neighbourhood, over which they and their ancestors have roamed time immemorial, collecting heath and fuel, and their geese feeding on the patches of grass, which here and there were found among the furze and heather. They are indeed a curious race, and it is impossible to talk with them without discovering how distinct they are from the fine character of industrious English labourers, a class of men who, perhaps, have not their equal in the world. The broom-cutter seldom makes his appearance in the day-time. He roams about in the evening and night, cutting heath on the property of others, and generally attended by a rag-

ged shoeless boy, and a half starved mongrel dog, which may now and then be useful in enabling him to snare a hare or a rabbit. I was returning homewards one evening and fell in with this group. The face of the man was hollow and careworn, and somewhat grim, — his eyes appeared little better than blanks, and deep sunk in his head, but overthatched with a white bushy brow — his nose was long and thin, and his jaws like those of a skeleton, but grizzled over with a stubborn beard of a fortnight's growth. The boy was ragged as he could well be, but shewed evident marks of cunning and roguery in his countenance. The dog was the very personification of a *pickle*, and after sniffing at my legs, much to my discomfiture, uttered a growl, and retreated behind his master, eyeing me, however, all the time with anything but a complacent look.

I have always found that the best way of getting into conversation, with the sort of person I have attempted to describe, was by appearing to take an interest in his apparently forlorn condition. The man seemed an exile from common sympathy, and one of those beings whom drudgery, and privation had left nothing to fear, and nothing to hope for. He complained of his altered condition since the enclosures, and how difficult he found it to maintain his family. He did not attempt to conceal the sort of life he led, — half thief and half

poacher, or his utter recklessness of the consequence. I am much afraid that these characters are but too common on the borders of extensive heaths and forests, where poaching affords a precarious existence, and leads eventually to almost every other vice. Burnings, robberies and various depredations are committed by these outcasts of society, who are in as great a state of ignorance, with respect to religion as it is possible to conceive human beings to be.

Some of the wives and mothers of this class of men frequently make dupes of simple minded country girls, by pretending to tell their fortunes, or the fate of their lovers. In these enlightened times, it might be thought that superstition had been exploded, and that the reign of witches was at an end, but this is far from being the case. An observant Clergyman and Naturalist in Suffolk states, that in numerous cottages in almost every village in that county, a folded sheet is to be found containing the fabulous description of our Saviour's person, together with the letter of Lentulus describing him, which, with a few prayers and superstitious verses attached, is supposed to be a preservative against danger or evil influence. This sheet of paper is sometimes pasted on the cottage walls, and sometimes carried in the pocket, and is brought to the villages by the travelling pedlars. My informant, stated that he had been offered one

by some of the female peasantry, when they heard he was setting out on a journey. They may now and then be seen pinned to the head of their beds. It is to be hoped, that this superstition will disappear before the spread of religious instruction, and the unwearied endeavours of our excellent clergy to enlighten the minds of their poorer neighbours.

PHŒBE ELLIOT.

I, unseen, was near,
And saw the bosom's sigh, the standing tear!
She thought profoundly, for I stay'd to look,
And first she read, then laid aside her book;
Then on her hand reclined her lovely head,
And seem'd unconscious of the tear she shed.

CRABBE.

It was the middle of Summer. The sun had set in its most glowing colours, behind the only hill which the view from my window afforded; but it rose the next morning obscured by a heavy rain, and a thick mist from the river. The prospect was dreary, but as hope is ever springing in the human breast, I still flattered myself that before night closed I should be cheered with one ray of sunshine, or one glimpse of heaven's clear blue sky. The small trelliced porch, into which my garden-door opened, was covered with jasmine and honeysuckles, the drops from which fell on my head, as I ventured out to take a better survey of the horizon. Indeed, the rain was monotonous to such a degree, that I began to make some unpleasant reflections on my present situation. I was in solitude, not certainly forced upon me, like

that of Robinson Crusoe by accidental circumstances, but I was alone from choice. "It may all be very well for the sake of variety," I said to myself, "or in fine weather, and with the power of joining my friends when the sense of loneliness becomes oppressive, but such a day as this——" and I gave a long, wearied yawn, which put an end to my soliloquy. In short, I was on the point of having a bad attack of blue devils, when suddenly I perceived a break in the clouds, and a speck of blue sky to windward. It was small indeed; but as a drowning man catches at a straw, so did I in this "even down pour," on such a slender promise of a brighter evening. The event justified my anticipations. In half an hour the rain had ceased, and I rang the bell for thick shoes and a great coat. Thus armed, I sallied forth to refresh my mind by a change of objects, and my body with a little fresh air by the river side. Fishing was out of the question. The grass was much too wet for any, but the most determined disciples of Izaak Walton: and as I do not profess to be one of these, I was content to follow the beaten path, which ran parallel with the river, and only a few feet from it.

Dr. Johnson, and many other sedate and learned men, have expressed a great contempt for the sport of fishing. In spite of this, I must confess myself to be an angler, not so much for the pleasure

of capturing a fish, as for the many objects, both animate and inanimate, which are constantly brought before me in my strolls by the side of a river. Here I have met with a variety of characters, some of them true Waltonians, and viewed such lovely scenery of Nature's own creation, as those only can meet with, who seek it in sequestered haunts or in smiling vallies. The river was before me, calm and still as "sleeping infancy," save when, now and then, one of its silent inhabitants darted playfully to the surface, and disturbed its smoothness, or two stately swans, which appeared to float on its tranquil bosom, brushed their feathers against the willows, which stooped to weep over the clear water. It was the moment of repose, and I saw its influence on all around me. The cattle were listlessly chewing the cud, while they stood motionless, waiting for their homeward call, and a boy was advancing to perform this evening office. As he approached me, I thought that he looked tired of the day and of himself, and I addressed him, somewhat rejoiced to hear the sound of my own voice, and happy to meet with some one, however humble, with whom I could hold a little conversation. The appearance of the lad was sufficiently striking. He was apparently about fourteen years of age, somewhat tall, and with a round and not ill-looking face. These advantages were counterbalanced by such a very re-

markable degree of obesity, that my first idea was to conclude that he was dropsical. Both before and behind he was a huge mass of flesh. I almost started as this remarkable figure approached, but he was apparently accustomed to the effect he had produced, and, therefore, answered my opening remark with an awkward bow, but with a good-humoured smile. We soon entered into conversation, and I found him not only shrewd and sensible, but also endowed with a considerable share of sly humour. He was, in fact, a village wit, a character I have occasionally met with, and which seems to be cast in a mould somewhat different from the rest of the world.

I have often observed, that those beings who appear to have been the production of Nature in some of her sportive moods, and are remarkably different from others, either in stature, shape, or voice, are generally proportionally eccentric in their characters and habits. Is it that they are anxious to make amends for their personal defects by their conversational powers, and proving the preponderance of mind over matter; or is it that the same peculiarity which pervades their outward part, distinguishes their intellectual one? Which is the fact I know not: but in my corpulent acquaintance, I found an additional instance of the truth of one or other of these suppositions. I was obtaining from this most original individual

much useful information, respecting the most killing flies to be used in the river before us, and he was in the act of shewing me some deposited in an old tin snuff-box, when it suddenly occurred to me, that I must have considrably delayed the "ranz des vaches" beyond its usual time. My conjecture was soon confirmed, and my ears disagreeably greeted by the shrill tones of a female tongue, calling my truant companion to account for his loitering.

The form to which this voice, loud as a trumpet, but with "no silver sound," belonged, appeared on the opposite side of the river, which at this spot was narrow. This was a happy circumstance for my fat friend, as otherwise there would probably have been more than a war of words. As it was, the luckless cause of the uproar, casting a rueful glance at me, proceeded in double quick time, to drive home the tranquil herd, who appeared quite unconscious of the pelting of the storm, which fell in such a torrent of bitter words from the lips of their ungentle mistress. I walked a few steps with my quondam companion, feeling real sympathy in the distress of which I had been the involuntary cause. "Your mistress seems rather cross to-night," I remarked, in a comforting tone, having always found that abuse of the offending party is the best way of administering consolation. "Cross!" said the lad, and the expression of his

countenance was not of the most placable description — "Cross! she's always cross." What a dreadful lot, thought I, to be cast with a woman *always* cross. I congratulated myself on having a partner whose "voice was ever soft, gentle and low." *Always cross* was ringing in my ears, when I saw a respectable elderly-looking man coming towards us. "There comes master," said the boy, accompanying this piece of information with a side glance at his virago of a mistress, who still kept her station by the side of the water, evidently intended as a hint that his master came in for his share of abuse, a circumstance which probably afforded the boy no small degree of satisfaction. The appearance of the old man was much in his favour. He was of a large and athletic form, and above the common height, his head and shoulders were slightly bent, apparently caused more from depression of mind than from age. I fancied that his countenance must have once borne the stamp of cheerfulness and good humour, but that domestic troubles and other trials had occasioned his downcast and melancholy look. On addressing him, he raised his hat respectfully from his head, and appeared pleased with being noticed. "That good woman was, then, your wife," I enquired. The old man answered with a sigh, as hopeless and desponding as ever came from human breast. "She is my wife, Sir, and a precious burthen I

have of her;" but, with a laudable desire of making the best of her, he added, "she's a good twenty years younger than I am, and minds the cows and all about the house, which is more than I could do in my best days; and now the gout takes me so, that I am not fit for anything but just to hobble about with my stick when the fit goes off. While it lasts, I am obliged to keep to my great chair, and a heavy time I have of it, when I cannot get out of the sound of that woman's tongue."

It was impossible not to pity him, and I enquired whether he had any children to console him in his troubles, and to nurse him in sickness. I had touched a chord which vibrated to his very heart.

"Sir," said the poor man, and his eyes appeared fixed on the strong hand which rested on his staff — "I *had*, Sir, a daughter," — and while he grasped the stick with a convulsive movement, an exclamation, bordering on an imprecation, on the step-mother of his darling child, escaped his lips. She had stricken her young heart with despair, and been the means of bringing her to an untimely grave.

The tears chased each other down the old man's furrowed cheeks. He had, probably, been little used to sympathy, and he appeared to feel those expressions of kindness which it was impossible not to offer him. There was something very strik-

ing in his attitude, but difficult to describe, as well as his moving tale. Crabbe alone would have done this, that poet of real life, though not in its most tempting garb. He has indeed been justly styled

Though Nature's sternest painter, yet the best,

and will live longest in the hearts of all her true lovers.

Though I do not possess the poet's power of description, still I delight in the "simple annals of the poor," and will endeavour to relate the little tale of James Elliot, as I heard it at different times, partly from himself, and partly from others, while I occupied a small fishing cottage in the neighbourhood.

Elliot had been, for ten years, the happy husband of a good and industrious woman, who managed his house and dairy, but who unfortunately died, leaving him an only daughter. Phœbe then became everything to him. She was affectionate, gentle, and obedient; and, as she increased in years, her beauty was very remarkable. She formed the happiness and joy of her father, running to meet him as he returned from his farm in the evening, placing his high-backed oak chair for him by the side of the fire, and arranging the tea-cups on the clean round deal table near him. Phœbe was, in truth, a lovely flower, blooming as she did in the rough and uncultivated soil around her.

The eye would rest upon her, as on a rare exotic, if perchance such should be found in the midst of a dreary waste; but, as a plant so placed, would fade for the want of delicate nurture, so did this sweet and sensitive flower, droop in the ungenial atmosphere around her. I have heard many describe the cottage maiden. Tall and slight, her dress of the simplest form, her brown hair braided over her clear white brow, was gathered under a small cap of the whitest materials. No ribbons or ringlets were called into requisition to add to that beauty, whose chief merit was derived from its simplicity. On a summer's evening, she might be seen quietly seated outside the cottage door, her head bent over her work, and which was not raised when the passer-by paused for a moment to gaze on the graceful person before him. A slight blush would tinge her cheek, while undergoing this silent tribute to her beauty. The gentle girl was always ready to enliven her father with her smiles; and when he was attacked with the gout, she ceased not to be his patient and attentive nurse. Phœbe might have her faults, but we must take her as she was —

> A creature not too bright and good,
> For human nature's daily food,
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

Unfortunately for her future happiness, she had

hopeless and wretched existence, daily praying that his sorrows may find a speedy termination in the resting-place of his daughter.

I went to see the spot, on an autumnal evening, and to my surprise found the fat cow-boy, with a small bill-hook in his hand, employed, as he expressed it, in *slicing* away the nettles which had sprung up on Phœbe's grave. The same natural and beautiful sentiment filled his humble untaught mind, as animated the breast of the poet,* who in his early life, equally humble, thus wrote on his Anna's Grave, —

But who, when I am turn'd to clay,
Shall daily to her grave repair,
And pluck the ragged moss away,
And weeds that have no business there?

And who, with pious hand shall bring
The flowers she cherish'd, snow-drops cold
And violets that unheeded spring,
To scatter o'er her hallow'd mould?

* William Gifford.

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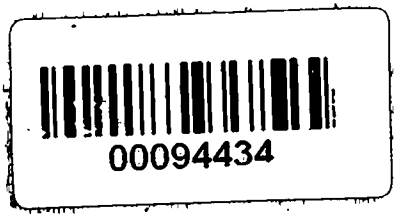
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